

*The Australian*

# WOMEN'S WEEKLY

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AUGUST 25, 1954

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See page 2

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by Richard Hudnut

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# The Australian WOMEN'S WEEKLY

AUGUST 25, 1954

Vol. 22, No. 13

## A NEW DEAL FOR DIABETICS

THE Diabetic Association is campaigning for a new employment deal for its members.

What gave this new move its momentum was the announcement early this month that a leading life assurance association is now accepting diabetics as a life insurance risk.

*The announcement opens up a new vista of security for sufferers from this disease as well as new avenues of employment in large organisations where diabetics have not been accepted as employees because of existing superannuation schemes.*

Diabetics are now living longer. The tremendous medical strides made in the treatment of their disease have been amazing in the 30 years since insulin was discovered.

*The acceptance of diabetics as an insurance risk in Australia follows a similar move by American companies in 1940.*

Australia enjoys with America and New Zealand the unhappy distinction of having the highest incidence of diabetes in the world.

"This is put down to the high standard of living which exists here and in the other countries mentioned," the President of the Diabetic Association, Miss Ruby Board, said.

Australian diabetics are fortunate in having the Diabetic Association, which exists solely to help sufferers in any possible way. It educates them to live normal lives, understanding the insulin and dieting regime which they must follow.

*Next in importance is the association's aim to educate public opinion to accept the diabetic as a full member of the economic and social life.*

Their acceptance as an insurance risk is a great step forward.

## Our cover:

- Our cover this week features an Irish mannequin wearing a Sybil Connolly creation. The sheath skirt is of shot taffeta with an enormous balloon panel on each side. The blouse is of fine Irish linen with embroidered sleeves. This striking evening ensemble is finished with a sky-blue cummerbund sash. The picture was taken in Dublin by Richard Dorner to give you some idea of the vividness of the Sybil Connolly collection, which we are bringing to Australia soon. Inside the paper there is a story by Miss Connolly about the preparations she is making for her Australian visit, with further pictures in monotone of some of her designs.

## This week:

- M. C. Higgs, whose story "First Catch Your Man" is published in this issue, is the sister of Gilbert Dalton, who has been called the best-known writer of boys' stories in Britain today. Mrs. Higgs is an Englishwoman who has lived in New Zealand for 13 years. Writing for her has to remain a sideline, because she is the wife of a busy Anglican vicar — Canon J. R. L. Higgs, of Wanganui, in the North Island — and the mother of three children. The family came from Hong Kong in 1941. As well as having spent six years in China, Mrs. Higgs has also lived in South Africa and Australia and has travelled in many other countries. A member of the New Zealand Women Writers and Artists' Society, she has published and broadcast short stories, articles, and verse.

## Next week:

- There will be something extra in the paper next week, and thereafter. It is a pictorial supplement — page after page of striking examples of the photographer's art that will give you great pleasure to look at, as well as keep you up to date with current events. One of the features in this section is devoted to the Borovansky Ballet, which is now drawing record audiences in Sydney after an equally successful season in Melbourne. This Picture Parade in an enlarged paper will make The Australian Women's Weekly quite astonishing value. There'll be a free novel, too — of course, it's "And Love Was Waiting," by Margaret Nichols.

## Letters from our readers

SURELY the standard of toy motor cars could be improved; in particular, wheels should be designed so that they can be rejoined to the body of the car if they come off. It is disappointing when an attractive toy fails to pieces when handled carefully.

M. Bickerton, Portland, N.S.W.

DOCTORS and nurses are too busy generally to give a sick child in hospital the love and comfort that bring out the best in the child. Mothers should not have to be separated from very small, sick children in hospital; a familiar touch does much for them.

M. E. M. Haines, Henley, N.S.W.

IT should be compulsory for all drivers of motor vehicles to carry a small fire extinguisher. The cost of this would be small compared to the lives that are lost when cars crash and occupants are burned to death because there is no fire-fighting equipment.

(Mrs.) O. Breen, Arncliffe, N.S.W.

YOUNG girls of today should realise that marriage means more than love and kisses. My daughter of 17 wanted to become engaged and was surprised when I refused my consent as she was so young and had no glory box. She did not know, till I made out a list, how much she had to get. I had a half-dozen of everything when I married and I always wished I could have been able to afford more.

"Pen Pal" (name supplied), Greenhithe, New Zealand.

**THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY**  
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TASMANIA: Letters to Sydney address.

WHY are there so few women jurors in Australia? I think it is a good thing to get the rounded opinion of both males and females instead of the predominantly male view we seem to have in our courts.

H. Malvern, Kew, Vic.

SPECIAL classes in water safety should be held for New Australians before the surfing season begins. Many of them have not been "brought up" on the beaches like Australians and, through their ignorance, cause life-savers a lot of unnecessary worry and rescue work.

H. Kennedy, Manly, N.S.W.

I SEE it's been suggested that Dutch girls should be brought here to marry Dutch migrants. Is that necessary? In all our cities, except Canberra and Darwin, there are more women than men. With Australian wives, I feel, the Dutch men would be assimilated sooner, but with Dutch wives there's a danger of national groups forming.

(Miss) P. Costello, Brisbane, Qld.

# Tek

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# THE IRON COBWEB

BY URSULA CURTISS

WHAT turned up was a logical thing, a small but necessary link in the misty, twisted chain. It had its own prologue, and Elizabeth half recognised that at the time.

She had gone up to the studio at a few minutes before noon, because lately she didn't like being alone in the house. The children had been picked up for a pre-Christmas party, and Constance had asked for the car. Noreen, whose day off extended from twelve to twelve the following day, had hurried off to catch her bus.

The studio was bitterly cold. Elizabeth turned on both electric heaters, put a fresh sheet of copy paper in her typewriter, lighted a cigarette, and sat staring ahead of her.

The morning hadn't been peaceful. That wasn't due as much to Jeep's biting Maire in a transport of rage, or Maire tearing the leg off his battered rubber baby by way of revenge, as it was to Lucy Brent's late-coffee visit.

Lucy had been at her most Lucyish: nervous, irritatingly brisk, critical. "Haven't you lost weight, Elizabeth?"

"A little, maybe." Which was a lie; it was seven pounds in four weeks.

"Are you feeling as well as you should by now—or oughtn't I to ask?"

Nice points, both of them: how well should you feel when an unseen, uncontrollable presence, the presence of evil, had slipped quietly into the heart of your home? And should Lucy—Lucy ask?

Elizabeth hadn't had to answer that, because upstairs, dimly, there was a fresh burst of tears, and she was able to murmur, "Poor Noreen. She must be holding her breath until the goes off at noon."

"Noreen's quite good, isn't she?"

"Extremely." Elizabeth felt peculiarly defensive this morning under Lucy's sharp, roving gaze. When the other woman busied herself noncommittally with a cigarette, she took a moment of appraisal, a long detached look she wouldn't have dreamed of two months before.

Lucy was—thirty-four, thirty-five? Not tall, with a quick-moving, beautifully economical body that just avoided angularity. Small dark head, small clever face with haughty cheekbones and restless eyes.

Like a greyhound turned out by Bonwit's, Elizabeth had thought when they first met; she knew now that Lucy refurbished her own slender wardrobe patiently and expertly.

And what did she know of Lucy, beyond a few trivial details, Elizabeth thought . . . her darting gaiety, her passion for bridge, her deftness with a scarf or a medallion or a twist of silk? Nothing . . . The impromptu realisation brought her up short.

Lucy was looking at her and saying with faint amusement, "She doesn't like me, you know. I don't think she approves. Noreen, I mean."

"Nonsense," said Elizabeth surprisedly, and when Lucy smiled and shrugged her wonder took on an edge of annoyance. "What a peculiar thing to think. For that matter, you've never liked her, have you, Lucy?"

Lucy's eyebrows went up. She said mildly, "Like her? My dear, I hardly know her. As far as I'm concerned she's an appendage of the children, and them I adore . . . Put it down," said Lucy vaguely, "as a funny impression." She smiled her sudden warm, banishing smile.

"As you may have gathered, I'm not fit to talk to today. I have a horrible thing to ask you, so I will now take a running jump and get it over with . . . Can you lend me fifty dollars until January?"

"Of course," said Elizabeth. It seemed imperative to be as brisk as Lucy and not to offer more than fifty. "Will a cheque do?"

"A cheque will do wonders," Lucy said with frank relief, and thanked Elizabeth and folded it into her wallet.

Five minutes later she was moving towards the door, and that was when the children came down the stairs, ready for the party, shepherded by Noreen. That was when Lucy turned, and greeted Maire and Jeep, and lifted her eyes and said brightly, "Hello, Noreen, how are you?"

Noreen bent and adjusted Jeep's straps before she straightened and answered politely, "Hello, Mrs. Brent."

Elizabeth watched with a small shock the glance that went between them: Lucy cool and poised and a little challenging, still holding her mechanical smile. Noreen facing her in her rigidly neat white blouse and dark blue jumper, her gaze level, her composure matching Lucy's.

For a quick instant it echoed almost audibly on the air that they were not nursemaid and visitor, or even oblivious strangers, but hostile, well-aware equals.

She had a plot and a typewriter, peace, and pencils; at the end of an hour Elizabeth found that she might as well have been supplied with a shoemaker's awl.

The bon-bons—where had she seen those brilliant foils before? If she could pin that down, she would know who it was . . . who hated her.

Because that, all at once, was the only possible answer. The simplicity of it was appalling: the loathing that must have bred and spread behind a friendly face, the violence

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What did she know of Lucy Brent, beyond a few trivial details? Elizabeth thought, studying her silently.



WAS it real, ELIZABETH MARCH wondered, or only the result of illness and disappointment after losing her baby, this terrible fear and uncertainty that had invaded her life?

There was the devastating evening when she overheard her beloved husband, OLIVER, say to her friend LUCY BRENT: "What will we do about Elizabeth?" Was Oliver only worried about her health—or in love with Lucy?

There were the roses, torn from their stems—did she do that unknowingly? Who else, because NOREEN, the nursemaid, and the children, MAIRE and JEEP, were blameless.

Why did CONSTANCE IVES, her cousin-housekeeper, treat her strangely? Who gave the children those sweets that made them ill?

When she found that three forged cheques made out in her own handwriting to her former domestic, Mrs. BENNETT, had been cashed by a stranger, she hoped something definite would turn up about them. Something did. NOW READ ON:



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PLAIN AND CORK-TIPPED

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# Night Walk

A complete short story by ENID BOULTER

MRS. MERROW was telling Rose about the time she spent three weeks in hospital. Mr. Merrow came back into the room and said, "That was your cousin Andy on the phone. He can't get the car to start. He says he's very sorry, but he's afraid you'll have to walk home, Miss Ellett."

"But it's over two miles!" Mrs. Merrow exclaimed. "He might at least have phoned earlier. No, I suppose he wouldn't know—And, of course, he couldn't leave Ada. Shall you take the short-cut, dear, or are you nervy? It must be all of five miles round by the road."

They turned passionately towards her. Rose was from the city, where people never walk, and where there is no such thing as darkness and solitude. Rose was quiet, plain, and unattached. They were sorry for her.

"Oh, I shall be all right," Rose said, rising. "I shan't get lost, and I'll be quite safe. I don't scare very easily."

"Of course, you could even stay the night here," Mrs. Merrow suggested, not very enthusiastically. "A pity we haven't a car—"

"You're very kind, but honestly I couldn't possibly stay," Rose assured them. "A nurse must always be at her post on time in case of emergency. And Cousin Ada would be sure to have a turn if I wasn't there—but thanks so much for a happy evening."

"We won't keep you, then," they brightly said. Soon the door had shut behind her, and Rose was walking down the white water-worn drive out on to the lonely bush track.

Midnight had just gone over. The moon was full. The dusty path led on in a quietness of carven light, full of mysterious filigree, delicate silhouette. Yet it was the darkness that fascinated Rose, and that drew her eyes. Darkness older than all else in time and fallen from immeasurable distance. To walk under the trees in that moon-washed darkness was like walking on the bed of a prehistoric sea.

Rose had passed this way a few hours earlier in the ripe glare of sunshine. She found it hard to believe that this was the same world. Her own lack of fear rather surprised her. But this night world, still and serene, was somehow familiar.

The trees, pressing close up to the track, were like a herd of enormous friendly animals. They seemed to shuffle together, with sundry sighs, exhaling warm breath that she could feel against her own flesh. After all, the trees belonged to the same old earth, were equally fashioned of dust, rain, air. They had needs that were not unlike her own. Their companionship was good along the way.

She thought, with a sense of pure wonder, how beautiful this is! Yet the grand night put on no airs. She felt more at home in this immensity of breathing earth and pulsing, jewelled sky than she had felt all evening in her neighbors' house.

Perhaps I feel at home, she thought, because this shadowy quietness is like the world of my own dreams. Rose

was always peopling her own loneliness with day-dreams, fantasies, romances.

She had no illusions about herself or what people thought and said about her. She knew she was neither very charming nor pretty enough for notice. That was from living inwardly; there was nothing on the surface to glitter or chime. Inwardly, though, she could have all the fun in the world.

Day-dreams cost nothing, were secret and sacred, and nobody could laugh at you for making-pretend. Rose found strength from this inner happiness. And other people felt the power of her serenity and were drawn to it. Other people, that is, who were weak, or ill, or in need of comfort.

When Rose reached the bend in the track she saw a man detach himself from the darkness and step forward. For a moment she was scared. But then the moonlight clothed him and she recognised Luke Fennell, a neighboring farmer.

He lived alone in a big red house on a hill not far from her cousin Andy's place. He was a queer sort, people said. Rose had met him a few times when he had called at her cousin's farm, but he had never had much to say. He hadn't seemed to have a thought beyond the farm's business.

Standing there beside the track he loomed tall, muscular, and taut. Rose had a moment's impulse to turn and run, but commonsense put its foot down. She said quietly, "Good evening—"

Stiffly the man answered, "I'm sorry if I startled you. I happened to be over at Andy's and he said you'd gone across to see Mrs. Merrow. He was supposed to meet you, he said, only his car wouldn't start. He thought you might be nervous on your own, not being used to the bush. So I told him I'd stroll over and see you safely home."

"Well, that was kind of you," Rose said. "Thank you very much for a nice thought." The man waited until she was beside him, then they walked on together in silence.

Moonlight burnished their path, lighting up the color here and there in a leaf-spray or a flower. The hidden glory of some great over-arching tree, broken suddenly into an impulsive harvest of blossoms, scented the air.

Abruptly the man said, "No, that isn't really true—Andy could have come for you, but I saw to it that his car wouldn't start. I wanted the chance to come and meet you—"

Astonished, Rose exclaimed, "Oh? But we've met quite often before up at the house—"

"I wanted to get to know you. There's so little chance, within four walls, with always someone else within earshot."

Rose thought she had better laugh it off. "That's nice of you, Mr. Fennell. What was it you wanted to know particularly? My age, my fortune, or my antecedents?"

Luke Fennell smiled at that. "What's age once you're adult? A woman's best fortune is in her personality. You've wit, will, and wisdom, the three essentials of character. Order of birth is

something none of us can foresee, anyway."

"You're very comforting," Rose told him. She thought to herself, here's a man who can converse—a man who thinks for himself. Yet up at Andy's place he had been utterly tongue-tied. No conversation at all, past the weather and the state of the crops and herds.

They came out of the bush and onto a track winding round the face of a massive hillside—three-dimensional space, dropping to a creek and rising to a stand of tall pines. The sky above them opened golden-veined and parabolic. Underfoot the mown turf had a crisp springiness, raked swathes of ripe grass rippling away in pale tiger-stripe, smelling like honey. Rose breathed deeply.

It was ten years since she had begun her nursing training. By now her work had taught her infinite patience, caution, and forbearance. She understood authority, both as ruler and ruled. And she really thought that there was nothing left in life that could surprise her.

She said to herself: poor man, he's probably very lonely. He just happens to feel that he must talk to someone, some woman—we all like a bit of sympathy at times. I've happened to be handy and it's not the first time—

"When you've lived alone as long as I have," Luke Fennell remarked, "you get pretty sceptical. You find it hard to believe even in miracles."

"Miracles?" Rose repeated.  
"I'm past thirty," he said, "and I've never loved any woman yet. But when I saw you up there in your cousin's house serving that mean-spirited, miserly old skinflint cheerfully and patiently simply because she was helpless and suffering, I thought that there was a woman I could worship and not be ashamed. There's a woman, I thought, that I'd be proud to marry if she could give me love in return."

Rose was speechless with shock. She had never had any man speak to her like this before. Even in her own imaginary romances, manufactured to order when she felt her morale slipping through loneliness or neglect, there had never been this same breathtaking impact.

Between the dream and the reality there was a difference as great as that between Andy's dam and the ocean. She told herself that it was a good thing she didn't lose her head easily or put too much credit in the things that people sometimes impulsively said—

The mute eloquence of night spread out all round them. On the dark tapestry of sky were stencilled lovely patterns of young trees like dancers, of silver branches pendant above a pool. Soft slopes of pastureland curved peacefully away to infinity.

Rose thought, I'm glad I'm used to having people confide in me, knowing I'm no danger. But it's a bit hard, she thought, not to let your own feelings intrude at all on a night as poetical as this.

"Haven't you ever had a man in love with you before?" Luke asked her suddenly. Startled, Rose said no, not well, not seriously. She tried to make a

Along the moonlit track where the bushes rustled with  
strange whispers she found the reality of her dream

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joke of it, and admitted that sometimes she had had one—in her imagination.

"Yes," Luke agreed gently, "I know. The way I've had a woman singing and laughing from my windows in the sun." Rose's heart gave a funny little jump. There had never been anyone before who caught on to her own thoughts so quickly. He said, "But you've hoped for one?"

Rose looked up at the swinging stars. Ahead of them, through the branches of a shadowy, bulking shrub, a million knowing eyes seemed winking. The whole earth was alive with her and waiting for her answer. Quite suddenly Rose seemed to have become aware that the earth she trod was a star swinging freely in space. Her heart was its metronome.

She thought of the times she had wanted to cry out aloud against the cruelty of life that had given her a heart so hungry for love and no one to respond. But Rose had been trained in self-control, self-discipline. She didn't say a word, and Luke Fennell turned and smiled at her.

"You're not going to admit it?" he said. "You've learnt to put locks on your thoughts. There's no shame in the truth, though. And you can take my word for it, there comes a time when even pride can't keep the door shut any more."

For a moment then they stopped to face each other, come to the far gate at the paddock's end than led on into a lane. In the moonlight the man's face was beautiful, or so it seemed to Rose Elliott. There were lines of power in his face and in his body, transforming the homeliness he wore by day.

"It's a relief," he said, "to be telling you these things. I've said them so often in my mind, only knowing you as a possibility of my future—the someone who had to happen to me someday, unless God lied."

Rose was shaken. He took thoughts out of her mind and spoke them, unafraid. She wondered what he would say next. "Please! You can't possibly know me well enough to be sure I'm the right one—There must be others who would be much more suitable—" Yet in spite of herself, Rose had begun to feel wings under her feet.

Luke laughed. He had a rich, chuckling laugh as spontaneous as a child's, the kind that makes everyone else smile, too. "Why," he said, "I know you perfectly. I know you with the mercury of my blood. Whenever I'm in your company I feel lightened and warmed. What can be a better proof than that?"

Rose said she was afraid time must be getting on. She said her cousin Ada would probably be worrying because she wasn't back

yet. "I think we'd better make haste," she said.

The sunken lane they entered led on round another great hillslope and was half hidden by encroaching bush and scrub. The lane had been gouged out long ago by bullock teams pulling logs to the mills. Now in the red earth banks little pardalotes nested; they saw roots bared and nibbled by wombats, bandicoots, wallabies, and ants' heaps furrowed by echidnas.

Possums in the treetops chattered at their approach or glided off from one tree to another. The bushes rustled and whispered, full of unseen life. Below, in the water-washed gully, the lace of fern fronds unfolded. Rose had never seen so taken unaware by the great power of life.

Luke looked at her and exclaimed, "Why, Rose, you're shaking! You mustn't try to hurry over this uneven ground; remember, you're not used to it. Sit down here for a minute or two."

Rose sat down obediently on a fallen tree at the edge of the track and told herself sternly to relax. What was there to get in a panic about? Hadn't she any self-control at all? She tried to think about something else.

Luke Fennell stood beside her, resting his arms on one raised knee, his foot on the fallen tree. He showed Rose that the fallen tree, not being wholly wrenched from the earth, still contrived to gush into new green all along its upper side, and all these eager leaves were going straight up towards the light.

"Rose, will you marry me?" he asked her.

"I want you to love me!" he corrected swiftly. "I can pay people to help me!"

She cried out, "But you're asking so much, so soon! Can't you give me time?"

She was swept by such conflicting waves of feeling. Dwarfed by the night's beauty, cajoled by its sweetness, wanting to drown in its flood. But by long training persuaded that caution was safer, she mustn't do anything foolish, nothing that might be regretted by sun-up. But, after all, she thought, surely some things are worth the price of regret?

Luke said, "Rose—" She looked up at him; they seemed to be looking right into each other's minds through the windows of the eyes. He said, "This is our moment of destiny. Don't you feel it? Time has been keeping this moment stored for us from the very beginning. Or why did you come here?"

"Rose," he said, "do you know that when I first met you up there in Andy's house I heard a voice speaking in my mind and saying, 'This woman's fate and yours are bound up together?' I'm not much of a one for fancies; I like reality, the things I can see and touch and hear. But that voice stopped me like a hand at my shoulder. It made me notice you, think of you, judge you—until I knew it was speaking the truth. Until I began to be scared in case I'd be too late speaking to you and you'd be gone away."

Rose Ellett could say nothing. She thought, this takes my breath away. I think somehow one of my imaginary romances must have got away and come to life. Only

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*Leroy*

has just the look you want for Spring

START WITH A COAT . . .

Best of all fair-weather friends is a fitted coat to cover your prettiest frocks when Spring blows cold. This Leroy-tailored beauty is knobby faille and Marion Harper chose it as a "Top 20" fashion! Happily priced at £10/19/6 it will be the perfect companion for the wonderful hand-printed silks, nylons, linens and Staelen cottons that are making headline news in Leroy's most exciting Spring collections. When you shop for your summer coat ask the store to show you the whole, wide, wonderful range of Leroy Spring fashions!



OR START WITH A SUIT . . .

Always a good start for ANY season, a suit like this has a positive genius for Spring—partly due to the wonderful fabric woven of pure silk and wool . . . partly to the Spring-pretty colours . . . and largely to the Leroy tailoring which gives a suit such an air! This is a "Lerolette" suit, styled and shaped for you who are 5'4" and under, priced at 16 guineas. It is typical of the light-hearted suits in the Leroy summer collection—others are in cotton, linen (with lace), pure silk, heavy rayons and (look for this) rayon and orlon!



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Please send me your fashion booklet,  
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# First catch your man

**When she saw him for the first time she felt  
as though she had been hit by a shooting  
star . . . he was absolutely her dreamboat**

MARGOT is one of those very blond, dewy-eyed girls and the boss gets very shirty with her at times for the way she punctuates, or rather doesn't punctuate, his letters. But I must say she often makes very shrewd remarks, especially when we girls are having our cup of tea at the office and generally letting our hair down a bit.

She is five years older than I am, and prides herself on being the sophisticated type, though I sometimes wonder whether she knows as much about men, for example, as she says she does. One gets a tiny bit tired of the way she remarks: "Men always do this or that" or "You never quite know with men."

However, I must say some of her words came back to me with real punch as I sat on the park bench that sunny spring day. I had taken my lunch to eat in the open air, and as I nibbled my sandwiches I watched the people passing with a careless eye.

There was a man playing with a toddler on the grass near the lake, and as he straightened up and turned in my direction, I felt as though I had been hit by a shooting star or something equally shattering.

He wasn't one of those rather dull modern heroes who are plain except for an interesting quirk of the eyebrow or a rebellious lock of hair, or something of the sort. He was just wonderful all over.

He was tall, of course, and slim, his mouth was firm and beautifully shaped, his hair was jet black, and his eyes that dark, dark, wicked Irish blue. He even wore very casual, good-looking tweeds, which I suppose nowadays sound too, too novelty for words.

I gave a deep sigh, and one of Margot's favorite maxims came back to me—*"The Nicest Ones Are Always Married."* How often had I heard her say just that very thing. The truth of it at this moment struck me like a blow.

It was hardly to be wondered at that I took such an instant dislike to this man's wife that no crime she could have committed would have surprised me in the least. I even wondered if she had been attacking her husband, as he had his wrist in plaster and walked with a decided limp. In any case, what was she getting up to while he minded the infant? Or perhaps he was a widower. I thought hopefully.

"Dadda, Dadda!" called out the little girl, running up to him on unsteady, fat legs.

He swung her up resignedly, tucked her in an expert manner into her stroller, and prepared to depart.

I believe there is a line in a poem or somewhere about no sun in the sky when thou art gone. I dusted the crumbs off my front and walked resignedly back to the office.

I thought it better not to say anything to Margot when we had our cup of tea in the afternoon,

as I knew that once she had made her fatuous statement about *The Nicest Ones Always Being Married* she would no doubt follow it up by saying complacently that his wife was probably fair, as *Opposites Always Attract*. As I am a brunette myself, there would be no particular comfort in such a statement.

Life has a very callous way, of course, of going on just as usual, whatever the condition of one's emotions, and I dare say I would have got over my smitten condition bit by bit had it not been for the fact that it was so brilliantly fine again a few days later that I decided to take my sandwiches to eat in the park as before.

Margot had a date for lunch with a young man with an insurance company, and had been preening herself all morning, not to mention murmuring that *These Affinities were Extraordinary Things*, though who would want to have an affinity with someone with spots and glasses I can't imagine.

Anyhow, it was a relief to get away, and I was day-dreaming on my usual bench in a vague sort of fashion when a large plush ball fell with a soft plop into my lap.

I looked up and saw the same infant of my previous encounter staggering towards me with a wide ga-ga sort of smile. I braced myself to face Daddy, wishing fervently that I had put on my yellow jumper instead of the pink one, which Margot says is just a "little bit schoolgirl."

However, it was a tall young woman who came swiftly over the grass to the rescue. I immediately decided she must be the baby's aunt or something, as she bore an extraordinary resemblance to my hero of a few days before. Her hair was gloriously black and curly, and she also had those dark, dark blue Irish eyes fringed with quite unfair and ridiculous lashes.

"I'm so sorry," she exclaimed, in one of those well-modulated voices you read about. "This young madam is just getting to the cheeky stage, hurling balls and things at people. I do hope you'll forgive her."

I murmured something which I hoped sounded appropriate and casual.

"Do you mind if I sit down here for a moment?" she went on, taking out a cigarette-case. "Will you have one?"

I rather wished I had said no as I puffed in an inexpert sort of way while she lit it for me, and the breeze blew the match out.

She lit her own with a neat flick of her fingers and stretched out her long legs in their irreproachable nylons.

"I was watching the baby the other day," I ventured at last. "Playing with her daddy on the grass."

"Good heavens, that wasn't her daddy," she said with a brief laugh. "My husband's sailor—hardly ever sees his poor little offspring."

My heart gave such a lurch that

I was afraid the front of my jumper must have given an obvious heave. I powdered my face with awkward fingers, hoping to conceal the pinkness of my cheeks.

"I'm so sorry," I murmured in what I hoped was an equally well-modulated voice. "I heard the child saying Dadda, so I'm afraid I jumped to conclusions."

She gave me a swift glance. "Oh!" she said. "She calls everyone Dadda from the butcher to the postman. No. He's my brother. He's in the Navy, too, but he's staying with me, getting over a motor smash. Will drive too fast, the silly ass. Still, he comes in very handy as a baby-sitter."

She stretched herself, got up, lifted the toddler, who was trying to bury her ball under the gravel on the path, and with good-natured nod to me and precisely the same movements as her brother, tucked the baby up in the stroller and went away.

Margot is very fond of saying that *Of Course It Would Rain*, and I must say that I couldn't have wished more earnestly for fine weather the next day, even if it had been the office picnic.

However, for once all the elements were on my side, and I walked into the park at midday in my yellow jumper, feeling on top of the world.

I ate my sandwiches on the opposite side of the lake, because I never think one looks one's best with one's lipstick all eaten off. Then I carefully renewed the latter, sprayed a little Purple Temptation behind my ears, combed my hair afresh, and strolled off to my usual spot.

Of course there was every reason in the world why he shouldn't be there at all. The baby might have measles, or they might have changed their time for coming out, or the mother might be in charge again, or—oh, well, lots of things.

I could hardly trust my eyes when I saw him, propped negligently against a tree, reading a newspaper, while the baby rolled its ball up and down the grass.

How divine he must look in naval uniform! I felt a distinct sensation of melting in the spine at the thought.

I placed myself in a strategic position, where the baby could throw its ball in my eye if it felt like it. I even snapped my fingers encouragingly in its direction. But the little beast took no notice of me, absolutely none. Looked right through me.

The time wore on and I was getting desperate. I should have to be going in a few minutes. I might never see him again. It was now or never.

I waited until he was obviously immersed in what he was reading. Then, as the baby rolled the ball in my direction, I gave it a sharp kick and sent it spinning down the slope towards the water. The child began to scream, and staggered after it on unsteady fat legs, and I, of course, rushed heroically to the rescue. I tore down to the edge of the lake, snatched up the ball just as it was about to bounce in, then turned round and caught the toddler as she



His hair was jet black and his eyes that dark, dark, wicked Irish blue. He wore casual, good-looking tweeds.

came rolling down the grass after it.

Then, looking my very best, with the sun in my eyes and the child in my arms and a merry laugh on my lips, I turned to face my hero, who had thrown the paper down and with a couple of bounds, or hops, rather, on his lame leg had reached my side.

"I say, thanks awfully," he exclaimed, taking the baby from me and crinkling up his eyes in the most breath-taking way.

"Not at all," I replied lightly, feeling quite casual and easy. "I think it's so good of you looking after the child like this. Not many men—"

"Oh, well, turn and turn about, you know," he said with a boyish grin.

which turned my bones to jelly. "My sister — the baby's mother — is awfully good when she comes to stay at our place. My wife says she's an absolute wizard with the kids."

It's a curious feeling, having the world crash about your ears. A kind of booming in the head and paralysis of the nervous system.

As Margot says, *We Women Are Always The Ones To Suffer*. I sometimes wish she would drop the capital letters and concentrate on punctuation or something else for a change. But there you are.

(Copyright)

# INDEPENDENT



Illustrated by

BROAD  
HOB.

**T**HIE Branch Oil Company consisted of a desk, a chair, a file cabinet, and one big hope. Ed Branch was its president and only employee, and to date the company had just one oil deal—pending.

"You wasted your time driving all the way down here, young man," old T. J. Mullen told Ed from the porch of his ranch house. "I've got nothing against you. But I'm a cattleman. I don't like oilmen and I'm not leasing an inch of this ground to any of you."

Ed tried to look as if this weren't his second, and maybe his last, oil venture. He was out on a limb to the tune of 55,000 dollars. To date, he had drilled one dry well and it had cost him 35,000 dollars, plus the outrageous interest on his loan.

That had left only 20,000 dollars to finance any future oil operation. However, he was certain there was enough oil under this ground where he was standing to pay off the 55,000 dollars and keep him in the oil business for good.

In the hot blaze of sunlight he squinted at the weathered face of the old rancher. Dead set, that was T.J.—from his white hair down to his boots. "You could make a lot of improvements on this ranch with some oil money, Mr. Mullen. I can see—"

A barking dog came running up between Ed and old T.J. It was large,

black-and-white, and slightly shapeless. In pursuit of the dog came a girl of about nineteen—small, dark-haired, dark-eyed, and anything but shapeless.

"My granddaughter, Rora. Miss Aurora Mullen," the old man said gravely. "Rora, this young man here is a lease hound. The name is—he scowled down at Ed's business card and adjusted his steel-rimmed glasses—"Branch, Ed Branch. Independent Oil Operator."

Rora put out her hand—a small capable hand that seemed to have been wired for electricity. Ed held it for several seconds, and then let go when he realised the old man was glaring at him disapprovingly.

Ed drew himself up to his full height—which was a little less than he wished it was, in this land where most men were over six feet—and remembered to look like the president and owner of the Branch Oil Company here on urgent business. "Your granddaughter, sir," he said to old T.J., "wouldn't you like to see her rich?"

"Nope. Sure wouldn't. I've got three granddaughters—two of them still away at school—and this land and the cattle on it will take mighty good care of the lot of them."

"But, Grandad," Rora protested, "as the ranch hands are always saying, 'land-rich ain't oil-rich.' If this young man can bring you in enough money you could afford to sink new water wells, and you wouldn't have to worry about water for the herd during a drought."

Old T.J. scowled. "What's got into you, Rory?" he said. "You never had any more use for messing up this place with oil drillers than I did. Besides, you ought to be getting yourself ready. Claude Moorehead'll be along soon to take you to that barbecue."

Rora glanced down at her dusty boots. She flicked an imaginary piece of dust from her red sweater. "Oh, I'd forgotten all about that," she said. And then, as if some happy idea had suddenly occurred to her, she smiled at Ed. "I'll dress and hurry right back."

"Well, so long, young fellow," old T.J. said, affable for the first time. "Sorry you had to make such a long trip for nothing."

Desperately Ed unrolled his map case and brought forth an oil map. "But look here, Mr. Mullen, there are producing wells on three sides of your property, and if you're not standing on an oil field right now, I'm—" He had started to say, "I'm an even bigger fool than my father thinks I am."

T.J., halfway to the door, stopped walking, and with a slow, unwilling turn of his head he looked again at the oil map Ed was holding out.

"Plenty of operators have been out this way before with oil maps bigger and better than that one. But we'd better understand each other, young man."

He came back, and his faded blue eyes became suddenly bright and intent under his shaggy white brows. "Main grudge I've got against oilmen is that besides being a nuisance, they go gallivantin' all over the world—Iran, Arabia, Ethiopia—and any girl that marries one of 'em they just travel around like dust!"

"Now, my granddaughters are all I got to hand the ranch on to. I won't live forever—I'm seventy-six now—and I aim to see my girls settled down with ranchers who can look after them and their land. Plenty of respectable young fellows around here like Claude Moorehead, and I don't want my girls

getting any crazy notions about gallivantin' oilmen."

Under the old man's accusing gaze, Ed felt himself blushing violently. After finishing up at the University of Texas he'd been determined—despite family opposition—to be an oilman. He had borrowed most of his capital from his father, who had let him know that was all he could borrow.

He was charging Ed eight per cent interest on the loan, readily admitting that was a higher rate than any bank would dare to charge. But no bank would be fool enough to lend that amount to an unknown young geologist—as Ed had soon found out.

"You're not married, are you, young man?" old T.J. was saying. "You haven't got that settled look to me."

Ed got out a handkerchief and wiped his forehead. "I'm not married, and I don't intend to be. You're dead-right about oilmen; they make life hard for any woman."

Old T.J. gave a deep sigh and eased himself down a little stiffly on to the porch steps. He was still scowling, but Ed felt he had made some headway. He pressed his advantage.

"I'd like to make a pact with you, Mr. Mullen. As I see it, you and I can do business together—if I keep it strictly business. And I'd see to it that the workers on this job were so oil-minded they wouldn't attract the interest of any girl! I'd pick them as homely as sin, in love with their wives, and so bitten with oil fever they wouldn't look up from the drilling operation the whole time they were on your land."

Old T.J. took another look at the map. "Reckon I could depend on you?" he said. "Short fellas like you sometimes get quite a way with girls."

"I'm interested only in oil," Ed said firmly. "As for women—"

The screen door banged open. There was a click of high heels across the porch, a swish of petticoats and a jingle of bracelets. As Aurora came towards them, wearing a halter-neck blouse, a full cotton skirt, and a wide belt, Ed found it hard to keep that convincing ring in his voice as he said, "My heart is in the oil business, and that's my only—"

He was relieved when the sound of a honking horn drowned out the rest of his speech. A long green sports car, its newness showing through a film of road dust, rolled up the curving drive.

A young man opened the door and got out. Ed saw that he was well over six feet and extremely broad-shouldered, dark and handsome enough to be Rora's brother. But there was nothing brotherly in either the look or the hug he gave her.

He came over then and pumped T.J.'s hand with a heartiness that Ed felt was somehow overdone. "Claude Moorehead from the next ranch," T.J. said briskly. "Ed Branch."

Moorehead grinned, showing his white, even teeth. But his close-set green eyes were cold as he looked Ed up and down and glanced at the oil maps spread out on the porch floor beside old T.J.

As Rora and Moorehead drove off, Ed told himself he was glad they were out of the way. He and old T.J. could get down to business now. He almost wished the two of them would elope and get out of the way for good.

It would have been a lot less complicated if they had eloped, it turned out in the weeks that followed. As the Branch Oil Company started rigging up to drill in the south-west corner of the Mullen ranch, Rora followed Ed

# OPERATOR

BY  
SHERMAN  
DIXON

with a perversity he'd often heard about in women but had never before encountered.

She was in the way when the bulldozer was clearing off the mesquite on the well site, when they were putting in the foundations, when they were building the derrick a piece at a time, and moving in the drilling equipment.

"You aiming to go into the oil business on your own?" Ed inquired irritably when she'd asked the hundredth question.

"All I wanted to know," she said brightly, "was why you need all that stuff—the string of rotary tools, those pumps and engines, and that gadget you call the drilling bit?"

"Look, I told you three times about how we set the surface pipe, and all about how we pump water through the drill pipe and then out into the mud pit."

He knew he sounded edgy, but if she got run down by the bulldozer or hit in the head with a piece of pipe—well, blow it all, a woman didn't belong around an oil-well operation.

"I'm beginning to think you don't like me, Ed," she would say when he avoided her. He would swear softly and fiercely to himself and refuse to turn around, even when she touched his arm with one of her incredibly soft hands.

"I'll tell you, Rora," he said at last, "I like you a lot better when you're out with Claude Moorehead than when you're down here puttering around this oil rig."

Hot beads of perspiration, caused partly by the heat and partly by anger, formed on his forehead and neck.

"Why, you're getting all red about it," Rora observed sweetly.

*When Rora appeared Ed was in the middle of saying, "I'm only interested in oil. As for women—" Then he stopped and looked up.*

If she were a man I'd take a swing at her, he thought. "We're busy out here. I'm so—"

A hoarse voice, calling from the platform of the derrick, stopped him from losing his temper completely. His driller was shouting to him that they still couldn't get hold of the drilling bit they'd lost down the hole some thousand feet below. The drill stem had snapped. They'd already spent eight costly days on this fishing job and Ed's nerves felt ready to snap, too.

Rora sighed. "Well, I'll go away and leave you alone, Ed, if you'll just promise to take me to that square dance Tuesday night over at Claude Moorehead's."

"Moorehead break a leg?" he said.

"No, but I don't have to go everywhere with him, do I?"

In the distance, across the flat land, Ed saw old T.J. standing on the porch, a pair of field glasses focused upon them both.

"Look, go away, please—will you, Rora?" he said. "Just go away and stay away so we can get this job done and I can get back to my drilling."

She went away then, but he knew it wouldn't be for long.

By now she'd annoyed him so much she had even started coming back to him in his dreams. He'd find himself waking up in the night, tired as he was, wishing she'd marry Moorehead and get herself out of the way, and scared to death she would and he'd have to watch the wedding.

He was so tired that he didn't even feel any special

To page 55



none of them has ever shaken me up like this before—

Luke sat down on the log beside her and took hold of her hands. "Your eyes are speaking for you, did you know? They're saying wonderful things, Rose. They're shining like the eyes of a mother bird on her nest. You always keep you hair so neat, but if it had half a chance it would tumble into curly. It makes me think of a bronzing wing's breast, it's got that same softness—

"Don't try to keep your lips straight, Rose, they're kids on a swing—let them curve away into the sunshine. Rose, I love the way you're built, straight and slim like a young tree, and the way you walk, with your

## Continuing . . . Night Walk

from page 5

head up, moving freely, finding life good. I love you—"

"Luke Fennell!" Rose cried. She was blushing. She pulled away her hands and covered her ears. But she was laughing now, and so was he. The whole beautiful night seemed shaken with soft laughter.

He fell into step beside her as Rose got up and walked on. He took a deep breath, and put his shoulders back; he was younger, much more sure of himself now.

"Think of all the things we've got to get to know about each other! All our ideas. Years and years of our lives we've

spent apart and that we've still to knit up into one.

"Rose, what kind of weddings do you like? Don't you think big families are more fun? Shall you want a conventional honeymoon at some dreamy hotel with everyone looking on, or shall we just go home together and leave the world behind? Just think of all the things we have to tell each other that we've never yet told another living soul, because we've been scared to look a fool—or scared that telling might put us in their power."

Rose made a last bid for sanity and decorum. "I haven't actually promised, you know. Honestly, I do need time to think all this out."

"Think now!" he urged. "I'll be as quiet as a bat."

Confronted by the necessity to think, Rose found it quite impossible. But intuition reached out, to grope its way to the truth through pure feeling. As if she walked in the dark by touch only.

Coverly, she watched him making himself a cigarette. The play of lean brown fingers; he thought with his hands. In response, his face took lines of strength, behind which lurked sadness, stirring her pity.

Unbidden, the tight hidden bud of her heart's desires broke into flower, revealing a lovely flame. This was no new world beckoning her, uncertain, dangerous; but the life she knew transfigured by joy.

Her dreams translated into sharp, vital action. The same task of service, but with familiar gratitude become devotion, friendship grown intimate, partnership merged into union. Why, she thought, this is the job I've been looking for all my life.

"Well?" Luke asked, as they came out into full moonlight by the gate into Andy's drive. "You've been weighing me in the balance pretty thoroughly. Am I good wanting?"

His voice wasn't quite steady. Rose couldn't even speak. But she put out her hand, and their palms touched. The elation of contact was like fusing. They walked towards the gate in the moonlight with their linked shadows moving before them. A tall broad countryman and a slim woman with light step. Not strangers any more.

Luke said, "Rose, Rose!" He drew her inside the gateway, out of the prying moonlight.

The night had witch-magic and cast a spell. Dissolved in her exquisite dark fire. Part of this was Luke's kiss, his voice murmuring. Saying that love is the first necessity of life, and no man or woman can survive without love.

Saying, you and I, together greater than ourselves apart, alone. Saying, Rose, this is the moment, this is the place where we light our candles against all the winds of life. There was nothing Rose could find to say in those moments. But she kissed him of her own will. She had never given any man such a kiss before.

And when she left him, Rose rode on wings of ecstasy to the very door of her cousin's house. The door was shut, and no light showed anywhere. A respectable house, where folk went to bed at fixed hours, and no roaming through enchanted moonlit forests and the starry meadows of the sky. The footscraper, the wire mat, the shrouded window, each seemed to exude disapproval.

And suddenly, her love for Luke was all a dream, and like other dreams it was gone at the first impact with reality. Rose felt her whole heart cry out with pain. She couldn't bear it. She couldn't bear to go back to the loneliness, the drab monotony of cousin Ada's house, unsustained by love. She turned round and went running down the drive again, calling Luke's name.

Luke hadn't gone, he was still down by the gate, smoking and watching the moon go down the sky. To feel his arms round her again was beautiful, completely reassuring. To confess how foolish she had been, and how weak, was sheer joy. Never again now till life's end to have to close the door on dreams and happiness. This was the greatest gift of all.

No stranger now, but part of herself. Much more familiar to her spirit than those others



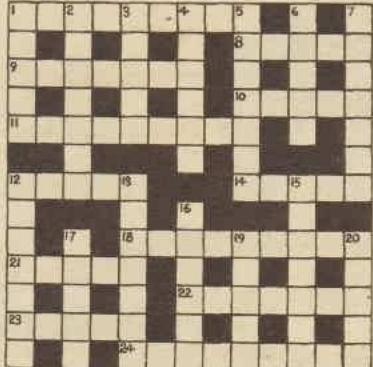
"Do you think you'll marry Sis before my piggy bank is full?"

## THIS WEEK'S CROSSWORD

### ACROSS

1. Child slept. Caused (9).  
2. Bring out, mostly Musolini (5).  
3. A medico, a little horse and the French hang trading (7).  
4. Imbecile to find a river or an island (11).  
5. An artful heavy-weight is a foolish person (9).  
6. Home sapiens to depart and leave a fruit (5).  
7. This grass grows where little Alfred follows little sister (5).

Solution will be published next week.



### DOWN

1. Nothing disturbs the dusk in a story (5).  
2. The corpse could be a mad dean (4, 3).  
3. Gabriel perhaps with an inverted leg (5).  
4. Quiet rest in an Italian river (6).  
5. Pours off mostly catchwords (7).  
6. A scholar in your eyes (5).  
7. Confound, the venerable ends in evil (7).  
12. Mother's little quarrel with a big dog (7).  
13. No vehicle in a musical instrument (7).  
15. Cleatrice to permit a color (7).  
16. Make plans including a border of cloth (6).  
17. All the world is this (6).  
19. This pirate is a wanderer (5).  
20. Backs of necks (5).

Solution to last week's crossword.

whose blood ran in her veins

"Oh, Luke," she told him, half laughing, almost weeping. "I was so scared you'd be gone. I got up there and began to think I must have been romancing again. But how am I going to tell them? How on earth can I hope to make them understand? What will they say? Just imagine when I tell them I'm going to marry Luke Fennell, that queer, quiet, lonely man—"

Luke looked down into her face, holding her, his eyes bright. "Yes, how will you tell them, Rose? How will you dare?"

For the first time in her life Rose reached up unasked and drew a man's lips down to meet her own. "I shall keep firm hold in my mind," she said, "of how your hand felt clasped in mine. Then I shan't even notice what they think or say. I shall be safe with you."

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## Our Irish fashion parades

# Sybil Connolly plans her Australian visit

By SYBIL CONNOLLY

So much has happened to me lately that sometimes—almost always—I can't really believe it is true. First of all there was a visit to America, and now another big adventure, my trip to Australia with my latest collection and three of my mannequins, is about to begin.

I CAN'T really imagine this all happening to me—I feel that I should start with "once upon a time" like any other fairy story.

For how could I have foretold a year ago the fantastic happenings that have established Dublin as a stop in the international fashion route and myself as a newly discovered interpreter of Irish design?

My wildest dreams never prophesied that, following my American trip, I would be visited by a representative of The Australian Women's Weekly, who would buy my entire collection, or that I would be designing clothes specially for the women of Australia—the country I am so delighted to visit.

Your sun and beaches, blue water and skies are so different from the mists of Connemara, but I believe our Irish fabrics and designs will blend and be happy way down there.

It has been fun designing my first swimsuit to stand up to the strenuous swimming and surfing you do. I hope you'll like the suit, it has some special features.

People often ask me how I get started on a new collection.

Well, I begin by taking myself off to Connemara for a week.

To describe Connemara to someone who hasn't ever been there is too difficult a task to attempt. It is not just the incredible beauty of the scenery which grips one, but there one is aware of a sense of mystic grandeur, which seems to be the key to all the legends, poetry, and music ever written about Ireland.

Here, among the ever-changing color of Connemara's mountains, seems the place to come for inspiration for a truly Irish collection.

First, I decide on some of the colors I will have dyed specially for me, to be used in the lightweight Donegal tweeds that I have woven.

Some of my colors are "burnt sugar," a bronze brown; "candle-light," a golden amber; and "Connemara mist," a soft-shaded grey like a day when the mist rolled down from the mountains and the Irish rain clung like dewdrops to the countryside around.

It was in Connemara, of course, that I found my inspiration for my "Irish Washerwoman" gown. The women of Connemara, with their regal carriage and simple dignity, all wear the red flannel petticoat.



SYBIL CONNOLLY

I interpreted it as a red flannel quilted evening skirt, worn with a white Irish linen blouse and a black fringed shawl.

Translated into fashion, the humble red petticoat took on an air of great glamor and was bought by society women in America, London, and Ireland.

It is amusing to think that the humble red petticoat which has been gracing the cottages of Connemara for hundreds of years now graces the mansions of the new world and the old castles of the British Isles.

The "Irish Washerwoman" gown always reminds me of America, for, when I was invited to show my collection by the Philadelphia Fashion Group in their centre, I was presented with their "Oscar" award for fashion, dressed as "The Irish Washerwoman."

It was St. Patrick's Day and the group gave a wonderful lunch in my honor with green dishes—everything green, including the mashed potatoes!

In a "thank you" speech at the end of the luncheon, I remarked laughingly that I was going home to "sell St. Patrick's Day to the Irish." I never dreamed that they made so much of a celebration to honor our patron saint.

I wonder do you do the same thing in Australia? I know Ireland has strong roots in your vast country.

I suppose American women are the most fashion conscious women in the world! Maybe I will change my opinion after

representing Italy, Manuel Portago was representing Spain, while I to my delight and pleasure was representing Ireland.

I flew to America and I hate to confess that it took three cars to carry my luggage from the airport to my hotel. One drawback about being a woman designer is that one can never travel light!

Underskirts, ball gowns, cocktail dresses—clothes for this climate and that—even carefully packed amount to a considerable amount of luggage.

Waiting for the collection to be shown in America was nerve-racking, but it was a wonderful success.

I was overcome with a strange emotion as I was congratulated on the collection.

I realised in my heart that this was a big moment for Ireland. Now she stood shoulder to shoulder with France, Italy, and Spain, an acknowledged contemporary in the world of fashion.

And now Australia. Again I will feel, I know, that I alone will be carrying the responsibility of presenting Ireland to you as a fashion source.

But I will not be quite alone; with me will be the result of countless hours and days of close, fine hand-weaving, of hand embroidery and hand crochet done over the turf fires of the cottages in Donegal . . . exquisite Carrickmacross lace done by the nuns in the St. Louis convent and the work and energy and patient diligence of my own workroom staff.

## Our Parade dates

Our Irish Fashion Parades will be presented in association with the Myer Emporium in Melbourne and Mark Foy's Ltd. in Sydney.

THEY will open with a gala night in the Myer Mural Hall on Saturday, September 25, and will continue with afternoon and evening parades from Monday, September 27, to Friday, October 1.

Sydney's parades will begin with a fabulous evening of fashion at Princes Restaurant on October 4.

During the week that follows, parades will be held in the morning and afternoon in Mark Foy's spacious Empress Ballroom, finishing with a Saturday morning parade on October 9.

A special session has been arranged for business girls on Friday night, October 8. This will enable Sydney's business girls, noted for their smart dressing, to see the parades at their leisure. It will be an after-work parade that will end in time for theatre-goers to attend evening performances.

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# Irish Elegance

• The pictures on this page illustrate superbly Sybil Connolly's use of gossamer Irish linen for grand-occasion ball gowns. Her more informal evening gowns and her town suit show her clever adaptations of Irish tweeds.



"PIED PIPER." Evening ensemble of Irish-saffron tweed skirt, fine white Irish linen bodice, and an unusual snug-fitting black velvet jacket.



GOSSAMER Irish linen (right), caught into a myriad of fine pleats, fashions this beautiful gown for dining and dancing on summer nights.



CHARCOAL-GREY suit in tweed showing controlled fullness in shoulder and bust lines.



EXQUISITE grand-ball gown (above) in grey gossamer linen crinkle-cartridge pleated. At right: Pure white organza printed in the vivid green of the shamrock leaves of Ireland makes this enchanting short pleated evening gown from the Sybil Connolly collection.



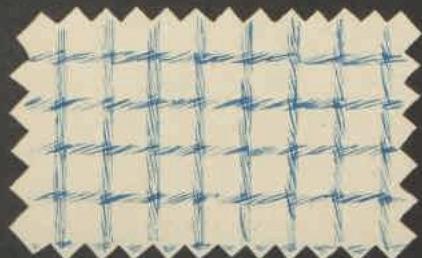
Make  
Dad  
Feel  
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GIVE HIM THE  
NEW

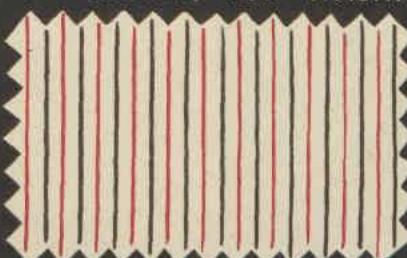
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## THE WILD PLACE

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Price 15/- From all Booksellers.

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — August 25, 1954

VISITING English author Maisie Ward, who is a relative of the Duke of Norfolk, had a fine time talking from a rostrum and coping with hecklers in the Sydney Domain.

We found her there the other Sunday speaking for the Catholic Evidence Guild with her husband, Australian Frank Sheed.

Mrs. Sheed shares honors with her husband as a writer and book publisher as well as in soap-box oratory.

Each has written several books and, in the interests of their publishing firm of Sheed and Ward, they live six months of the year in London and six months in New York.

Mr. Sheed, whose intellectual brilliance made him one of the giants at Sydney University when he was a student there in the 'twenties, was a lawyer and schoolteacher before going to England and meeting his wife — at a street-corner meeting.

Mr. and Mrs. Sheed made some interesting comparisons for us of hecklers in three countries, gathered during 35 years of public speaking in England, Australia, and U.S.

The Domain crowds, we were proud to hear, can hold their own with any in the world when it comes to enthusiastic heckling.

"They're like the London crowds," Mrs. Sheed commented, "warm and responsive, just like the people who come to listen to us regularly around Hyde Park."

"Americans are completely different," said Mr. Sheed, "they're unbelievably polite. Where Hyde Park crowds would shout 'Hooray!' at me, Americans call me 'professor' in a very civil way."

"Personally, I think I prefer the English-Australian sort of crowd. They're much better fun."

During their years of space-making, the Sheeds have won over some of their persistent hecklers and made friends of others.

Mrs. Sheed told us of one such friendship.

"We had gone over to Paris on our silver-wedding anniversary to avoid being given teapots by our friends, and only our daughter Rosemary knew where we were staying," she said.

"But one of our regulars, who had attended all our London meetings for 30 years or more and invariably disagreed with us, wormed our address out of Rosemary and sent us a telegram of congratulation.

"It's one of the nicest things that has happened to us."

A COLLEAGUE of ours is still grinning over a conversation she heard in a tram on her way home from work the other night.

Asked by her friend how she had enjoyed a film, a chic young teenager replied: "It was quite nice. It was all about what would happen if an atomic bomb fell."



### The nostalgic bookworm

WE felt a nostalgic yearning for our childhood days when we went to the Education Week exhibits of books and saw old favorites on display.

The Heirloom Classics from Shakespeare Head Press, "Black Beauty," "Alice in Wonderland," and "Little Women," took us right back to the years when life was uncomplicated and the only worry we had was whether Jo would marry Professor Baer.

However, age caught up with us again when we saw the new True Book series about space ships.

They really set us back smartly in the generation to which we belong. We only relaxed again when we picked up True Books about steamships.

Glancing at the covers of the impressive array of books on display we were reminded of the haphazard way in which we used to read — grabbing any book we could lay our hands on.

Today's children are much better off. A list of books is compiled and recommended for them each year by the Children's Book Council.

The books are arranged under headings indicating the subjects and the age groups for which they are suitable.

The list can be obtained free from the officer-in-charge of the School Library Service, Bent Street, Sydney.

Noted chefs will give demonstrations of how to cook exciting dishes.

Among the exhibitors will be scientists of the C.S.I.R.O. and the Federal Department of Agriculture, brewers of beer, and biscuit makers.

The exhibition will be held at the Exhibition Building from January 26 to February 5.

The list can be obtained free from the officer-in-charge of the School Library Service, Bent Street, Sydney.

Hot chocolate for supper is great! Its fascinating flavour is different — more satisfying than other supper drinks. Simply sprinkle two teaspoonsfuls of Cadbury's Drinking Chocolate on hot milk (or milk and water) for this deliciously different supper drink. And it's sweetened — doesn't need sugar added. ½-lb. packet — 2/- Made in a minute — right in the cup.

CADBURY'S DRINKING CHOCOLATE

Made by Cadbury's at Claremont, Tasmania, in the famous factory by mountain and sea.

mm/54

Page 15

### Maybe women are sweet enough

AT a recent wine-tasting function we attended in Sydney, we learnt with some surprise that nearly one-third of the members of the Australian Wine Consumers' Cooperative Society were women.

The society, which now has a membership of about 1800, was formed to supply members with vintage Australian wines at a minimum cost.

While sipping a glass of sherry, genial wine merchant Johnnie Walker told us that the women members were mainly professional and business women and wives of members of the society.

According to Mr. Walker, women are not only taking a greater interest in table wines, but are undergoing a rapid change in taste.

"In past years they have had a marked preference for sweet white wines," he told us, "but today we are getting an increasing demand for the dry red wines — claret and burgundy."

Before we left Mr. Walker showed us the most unusual reference library we've seen. It consists of dozens of bottles of wines from France, U.S., and Australia.

AN enterprising street

photographer who operates most mornings by the Archibald Memorial in Sydney's Hyde Park has succeeded in training the Park's fat and friendly pigeons to come to his call and provide an artistic foreground for pictures.

### Recipes from celebrities

LADY LOUIS MOUNT-

BATTEN and Clare Booth Luce, the U.S. Ambassador to Rome, are among the celebrities who have contributed recipes for favorite dishes to be featured in a souvenir programme for the Better Food Exhibition in Melbourne early next year.

The exhibition will be held at the Exhibition Building from January 26 to February 5.

Among the exhibitors will be scientists of the C.S.I.R.O. and the Federal Department of Agriculture, brewers of beer, and biscuit makers.

Hot chocolate for supper is great! Its fascinating flavour is different — more satisfying than other supper drinks. Simply sprinkle two teaspoonsfuls of Cadbury's Drinking Chocolate on hot milk (or milk and water) for this deliciously different supper drink. And it's sweetened — doesn't need sugar added. ½-lb. packet — 2/- Made in a minute — right in the cup.

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The Countess de la Falaise. The Countess, who has a radiantly lovely complexion, is devoted to Pond's Cold Cream. "I love the texture, the fragrance — but most of all the good it does for my skin."

You can make an amazing change in your skin — this very week!

1. Every night — briskly circle fluffy fingerfuls of Pond's Cold Cream up from throat to forehead. This Pond's circle-cleansing frees embedded dirt. It stimulates lazy circulation. Tissue off.

2. Now — "rinse" with fresh fingerfuls of Pond's Cold Cream. Tissue off lightly — leaving invisible traces of Pond's for softening your skin overnight, protecting it by day.

See a fascinating change come over your skin! Go today to your favourite cosmetics counter and get a jar of Pond's Cold Cream. Also available in handy tubes. PC44



"Sue's probably hopping mad. I forgot whatever it was she asked me to do on my way out this morning."

**Hot Chocolate**  
IS WONDERFUL  
FOR SUPPER  
... and it's so easy to make!

Hot chocolate for supper is great! Its fascinating flavour is different — more satisfying than other supper drinks. Simply sprinkle two teaspoonsfuls of Cadbury's Drinking Chocolate on hot milk (or milk and water) for this deliciously different supper drink. And it's sweetened — doesn't need sugar added. ½-lb. packet — 2/- Made in a minute — right in the cup.

**CADBURY'S DRINKING CHOCOLATE**

Made by Cadbury's at Claremont, Tasmania, in the famous factory by mountain and sea.

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LINDEMAN ISLAND offers a carefree holiday amid the beauties of the Whitsunday Passage. At the right of the picture, behind the tallest palm tree, can be seen part of Seaforth Island, where the Queen spent a happy day relaxing during her tour.



HOLIDAY PARTY leaving Cannonvale for South Molle Island with their caravan and car aboard the landing-barge Privateer. Full facilities for caravanners have been established at South Molle, enabling families to enjoy an inexpensive island holiday.

## HOLIDAYS . . . FOLLOWING THE SUNSHINE



SHIRLEY PORTER, of Brisbane, displays her reef catch of coral trout. Shirley recently took part in a picture of the reef to be shown in Australia, New Zealand, U.S., and Great Britain.

A caravan holiday on a Barrier Reef island sounds an impossibility, but at South Molle Island, in the Whitsunday Passage, off the Queensland coast, the caravan park is one of the latest features.

FOR a family which owns a caravan, the new parking area makes it possible to have a cheap Barrier Reef holiday.

Caravans are carried by barge from Cannonvale, a resort 15 miles from Proserpine. Transport on the barge costs £17/15/6 return.

Surrounded by coconut palms, the caravan park is a picturesque spot. Electric-light plugs connected to the main supply are provided. The modern store at South Molle as well as the hot showers and recreation hall and dining-room is at the disposal of campers.

Weekly charge for caravanners is only £4/15/6, which includes three cruises within the reef in the boat Crest.

Holidays in the sun of Queensland's winter are becoming increasingly popular not only with Australians, but with American, New Zealand, and English visitors.

During the winter months, the sun in North Queensland usually shines for days, weeks, and months on end. The temperature at midday approximates 70 degrees, the most healthful temperature of all for human beings.

Mackay, a sleepy little town with a population of 15,000, the centre for

*Story and pictures by HAROLD J. POLLOCK*

the largest sugar-cane growing area in Australia, is the stepping off place for a visit to the Great Barrier Reef and the beautiful islands of the famous Whitsunday Passage.

From Mackay, which has the largest artificial harbor in Australia, tourist launches provide transport to the island resorts.

Popular island resorts within a few short sailing hours from Mackay are Brampton Island, Lindeman

Island, Palm Bay and Happy Bay, in Long Island, and South Molle Island.

Most of these islands are also within easy sailing distance of Cannonvale, 100 miles north of Mackay, and only 15 miles from Proserpine, where there is an airport.

Weekly cruises to the islands within the reef on the luxury ships Royley I and Royley II for a charge of £22/10/- a week also leave from Mackay.

Silver Wake cruises from Seaford, 50 miles from Mackay, cost £19/10/- a week.

For those who prefer a mountain holiday, there is the Chalet at Eungella. With an area of 120,000 acres of forest lands, Eungella is the Commonwealth's largest national park.

Tariffs at these North Queensland holiday resorts run from as low as £19/10/- to £17/10/- weekly.



THE CHALET at Eungella National Park is ideal for a mountain holiday. Situated 45 miles west from Mackay, 2000 feet above sea level, Eungella—aboriginal for "land of mists"—has forests of giant trees, beautiful native orchids, ferns, and palms.

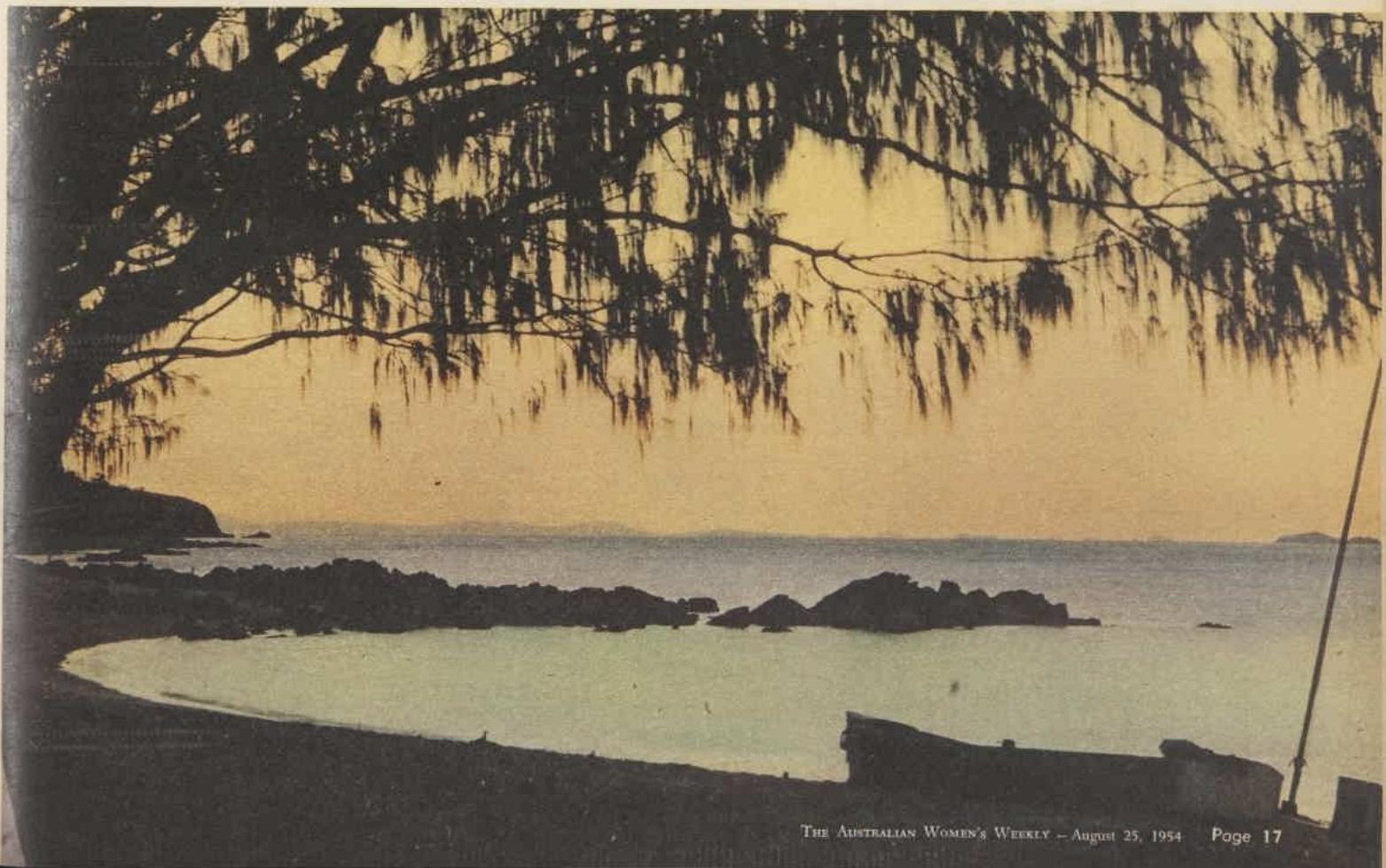


BRAMPTON ISLAND BEACH. Brampton is famous for its magnificent coconut grove, its beach, one of the finest and safest within the reef, and its landing-stage, sheltered at all times. Picturesque Carlyle Island is seen across the causeway.



TOURIST LAUNCH *Silver Wake* (above) cruising with tourists round Pentecost Island. Pentecost is also known locally as Lion Island. *Silver Wake* leaves Seaforth weekly.

WINTER SUNSET (below) seen from the beach at Brampton Island, within the Great Barrier Reef, is unbelievably beautiful in its brilliance. Reef sunsets are famous for color.





**TO MARRY.** Robin Stanton, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Stanton, of Bellevue Hill, and her fiance, John Keeling, of Sedlescombe, Sussex, England. They will be married on October 28.



**VENETIAN BLIND** (John Kenety) with Greece (Primrose) at the "Haywire in the Mediterranean" dance, which was held at the A.C.I. Ballroom in aid of the N.S.W. Institution for Deaf, Dumb, and Blind Children.



**GUEST-OF-HONOR** John Spender (right), son of the Australian Ambassador in America, Sir Percy Spender, with Don Booth and Carlie Schurtl at the party given by Helen and Valerie Jenkyn at their Pymble home.



**AT POLOCROSSE.** Among spectators who watched play in the Blake Pelly Cup and the Stanley Thompson Cup at the Burradoo Polocrosse Club field were (from left) Mr. Sam Stirling, of Point Piper and "Questing," Burradoo, Susie and Diana Stirling, Mrs. M. Dodson, of Norfolk, England, Catherine Stirling, Mrs. Venour Nathan, of "Haling Cottage," Burradoo, Mrs. Stirling and her four-year-old son, Robert.

## SOCIAL JOTTINGS

**FOUR** days after their wedding at St. John's, Muswellbrook, on September 18, Sue Macintyre and Dr. Michael Solling will leave for England in the Orientes.

Their home for the next two years will be at Deal, near Dover, where Michael will be a resident doctor at the Victoria Hospital.

The daughter of Captain and Mrs. David Macintyre, of "Kayuga," Muswellbrook, Sue will be attended by her sister, Bridget, 12-year-old Susan Fuller, and Susan's sister Rosanne, who is ten.

**THERE'S** a full programme right now for Rosanne Davenport, of Chatswood, and Jean Ranken, of "Carrick," Goulburn, who left for a trip abroad last March. After holidaying for a few weeks in Ireland — and attending the Dublin Horse Show — Rosanne and Jean left for Scandinavia last week, and they plan to travel to Scotland in September for the Braemar Games. Jean's mother, Mrs. P. Ranken, who accompanied the girls to England, will leave for home in the Stratheden in September, but Jean and Rosanne will not return till next year.

**DEFINITELY** "something different" is promised by members of the committee arranging the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust Ball. The ball will be held at the Trocadero on October 26 and the hard-working committee is headed by Mrs. R. J. F. Boyer.

**CHAD** and Jean Martin have chosen the names Paul Charles for their new son, who was born last week at St. Luke's Hospital, Darlinghurst. Jean is the daughter of Mrs. McMaster, of "Binnia Downs," Coolah, and the late Mr. L. J. McMaster.

**WHITE** evening gowns were a popular choice for feminine first-nighters at the opening of the Borovansky Ballet's second programme at the Empire Theatre. They included Sara Horner in a ballerina of heavy white corded lace covered with a hip-length ocelot jacket, and Mrs. John Bovill, who wore arctic fox furs over her full-length dress of draped wool jersey.



**IN THE FOYER** of the Empire Theatre for the opening of the Borovansky Ballet's second programme are Gordon Stewart and Judy Dryhurst. Judy covered her bouffant organdie dress with a wide, ruby-red velvet stole.



**FAMOUS CONDUCTOR** Walter Susskind and his bride leave the Melbourne Registry Office. Mrs. Susskind, formerly Jeanne Letcher, of Northcote, Victoria, wore a full-skirted dress of teal-blue taffeta quilted with black.

**PRE-WEDDING** parties and trousseau shopping are taking up most of Barbara Walton's time these days. Barbara, who is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Walton, of Rose Bay, will marry Barrie Loudon, of Bellevue Hill, at St. Mark's, Darling Point, on September 17. Among the parties for Barbara are Mrs. Les Roche's kitchen tea on August 25, and a luncheon at Princes to be given by Mrs. Bruce Courtney on September 1. Mrs. Harold Woolcott gave a bathroom tea for Barbara this week.



**ART SHOW.** David Georgeson, Anne Bongers (centre), and Sylvia Sheath were guests at the opening of the Society of Artists Exhibition, which was held at the Department of Education Art Gallery.

**A HOME** in Turramurra completed the day before their wedding — is waiting for John and Betty Granowski when they return from their honeymoon. Betty is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Braybon, of Roseville.

**BRIEFLY . . .** From Melbourne, Anne McCauley is off home soon after a short holiday here . . . Ex-students of Mount Saint Bernard College are holding a reunion at the school on *Anne* August 22.

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upholstery material



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upholstered furniture looks sparkling fresh again.

"VYNEX" means less work, more leisure, better home appearance and real economy — for "VYNEX" will look new for years and will outwear even the most expensive conventional fabric. Insist on "VYNEX" on

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Furniture Fashion Time

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"VYNEX" patterns in special window displays in  
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FAULTLESS  
SHIRT**

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*They'll whisper about you!*



*Perspiration  
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**MUM**

MUM Cream Deodorant with the miracle ingredient M3

eliminates perspiration odour by eliminating odour-forming bacteria. Mum will not harm or stain your clothing — nor will it irritate your skin. Mum is smooth,

creamy, easy to apply; the merest touch gives you instant bath-to-bath protection.

Everyone perspires—including you. And even perfume won't hide that tell-tale odour.

Safeguard your personal freshness by always using a touch of Mum after your bath or shower, then you can be sure of social acceptance.

And MUM stays creamy to the bottom of the jar.

**MUM keeps you nice to be near**

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THE HEALING WARMTH OF  
**WAWN'S WONDER WOOL**  
for NEURITIS, BACKACHE, 'FLU  
RHEUMATISM . . . FEEL IT HEAL



SWEDISH SINGER Richard Collett, who came to Australia to play the romantic lead in the musical "South Pacific". He found his own romance in Brisbane girl Dianne Bowser.

## ONE ENCHANTED MEETING Love story of stage star

From our London office

"We're not superstitious," said Miss Australia 1951, Dianne Bowser, and Swedish opera singer Richard Collett when they married in London this month on a day most brides avoid — Friday the 13th.

NO guests were invited and no reception followed. It was just tea for two after their five-minute surprise wedding in London's most famous registry office, Caxton Hall.

Red-headed Brisbane model Dianne first met her actor-singer husband two years ago in Australia.

"It was love at first sight," she said.

Richard Collett was playing the lead in the musical "South Pacific" in Melbourne. Dianne was freelance modelling there. "A friend took me backstage to meet the star of the show," she said, "and that was Richard. I thought he looked wonderful."

Mr. Collett had changed into street clothes and taken his stage make-up off before she saw him. "So," Dianne said, "it was the real man, and not an illusion. I fell in love with. At that stage I hadn't seen the play, either, so I can't be accused of being carried away by his romantic singing of 'Some Enchanted Evening'."

Mr. Collett was fascinated by the tall, slim girl with the flame-red hair, though he saw her only six times before she left Melbourne for Brisbane.

"I didn't see him for a year," Dianne said, "but he wrote all the time, and sometimes I heard him on the radio. He made some recordings from 'The King and I,' and he advertised raincoats over the air. When I heard a fascinating foreign voice saying 'You would look so much lovelier in a such-and-such raincoat' I knew it was Richard."

When "South Pacific" came to Brisbane and Richard Col-

lett and Dianne met again, they agreed that first impressions had been right. They became engaged, and Richard left the show. Ten days afterwards they were on their way to England and marriage.

Dianne is not worried about the 19 years difference between her and her 42-year-old husband. "Age doesn't matter," she said, "as long as you have the same interests. We're both very fond of music and art."

Nobody in the "South Pacific" cast knew when and where Dianne and Richard were to be married. They were not sure themselves. "On the plane trip over we decided to marry soon after we got to London," Richard said. "On Tuesday we made the date for the following Friday."

Dianne wired her family on Thursday, the day before the wedding.

She is the only daughter of Colonel Cyril Bowser and Mrs. M. E. Bowser, of Brisbane.

Two days before her marriage Dianne bought her wedding dress off the rack. It was a tight-fitting coffee lace ballerina that was a challenge to Christian Dior's "H" look.

Australians won't see their Miss Australia for a long time. Her Swedish husband is taking her off to live in his home city, Stockholm.

About Australia Richard Collett said: "I am not being corny when I say I spent two of the happiest years of my life there. That's the reason why I brought a typical Australian beauty back with me, to remind me of it."

Dianne said: "I am a lucky girl, and I know it."

Richard was the first actor she ever met, and she's not gonna wash that man right out of her hair."



IT WAS LOVE at first sight for beautiful Dianne Bowser (Miss Australia 1951) when she met singer Richard Collett. They met in Melbourne, and married in London.



Carnation—the really soft tissue (with double-ply strength) is specially prepared for Babies, Children, Mothers and those with delicate skin.

AT YOUR CHEMIST OR STORE

Completely wrapped for your protection . . .

**CARNATION Toilet Tissue**

Proprietors: Muir & Nell Pty. Ltd., Sydney and Melbourne.

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — August 25, 1954

# "Better wife than she is a runner"

## Marj. Jackson in gold-medal class as homemaker

By HELEN FRIZZELL, staff reporter

Just before Marjorie Jackson, the fastest woman runner in the world, arrived back in Australia from the Empire Games in Vancouver, someone asked her husband, Peter Nelson, "How is Marjorie with a broom?"

Peter replied, without hesitation, though a little shyly: "As a matter of fact, she's a better wife than she is a runner."

AND now Marjorie is to become a full-time wife and no longer a runner.

The finishing line for her career as Australia's foremost athlete was at Kingsford Smith Airport, Sydney — and she crossed it on her return from the Games, to repeat in front of the cheering crowds and whirring newsreel cameras that her days as a runner are over for good.

Instead of training five days a week as a runner, Marjorie will concentrate upon training as a housewife and as a business woman—for she is in partnership with her husband in his newly opened sports shop at Unley, South Australia.

"And this is the last time for us, too," said her father, Mr. W. Jackson, who with his wife and daughters Norma and Beryl waited quietly in the lounge of the air terminal for Marjorie's plane to touch down.

In the years since 1948, when Marjorie flashed to fame as a sprinter and went on to win nine Gold Medals at Helsinki Olympic Games and at the Empire Games, Canada, the Jackson family from Lithgow has become accustomed to the triumphal return of its third daughter.

This time they did not join the crowds on the tarmac, but waited in a room with photographers and pressmen, hearing from outside the cries of "Good on you, Marj!" which heralded her approach and the coming of the rest of the team.

Into the room came Marjorie, wearing a lei of pink orchids from Honolulu round her neck, a soft pull-on white hat, the green Australian blazer, a grey dress, and

leather court shoes which matched her Benedictine-tan shoulder-bag.

Hardly had she had time to hug and kiss her family before she was whisked away, to be confronted by microphones and cameras. While she talked, I watched her, gazing

her hat, and as she talked over the microphone she winked happily at her family and friends who stood by.

About her, though, one can sense a feeling of reserve, which seems a characteristic of her family. The reserve goes with a pleasant, natural dignity and lack of emotional fireworks.

Even now, after years of being a world celebrity, Marjorie seemed slightly nervous, betraying this by the movements of her hands, which alternately tugged at the back hem of her blazer or went up to settle the orchid lei in position. As she did this, I saw that she wore coral-pink nail polish, and caught the glint of the gold wedding ring upon her finger.

When the radio interviews were over, I managed to speak for a few moments to 23-year-old Mrs. Peter Nelson—who now firmly signs all autograph books as "Marjorie Nelson" and not as "Marjorie Jackson."

"I'm having a day with my family in Lithgow," she said, "and then I am flying down to Peter in Adelaide. The day I get there he is opening up the shop. We're going to sell sports goods, radios, and electrical supplies. I think that my job will be to keep the books and accounts, so I'm glad that I had accountancy training when I worked in Lithgow."

Peter Nelson, the former Olympic cyclist whom Marjorie met at the Olympic Games, has also retired from cycling to set up shop.

The Jacksons whisked their daughter from the airport into a waiting car. Before they left, Mrs. Jackson told me that they'd decided to drive straight through to Lithgow—about a four-hour journey over the Blue Mountains—without stopping for meals.

"We'll all have something along the way," she said. "I've filled a couple of vacuum flasks with hot drinks, and we cut a pile of ham sandwiches, so Marj. won't be hungry. And, in case it gets cold, we've brought rugs to put over us."

"Her room at home is just the same as it was before she married. The bed's made up, and she'll have breakfast in bed tomorrow morning. Then, just the day at home, seeing her old friends, and she'll be off to join Peter."

Now all of Marjorie's cups and prize medals have been packed, and will soon follow her to South Australia.

For, from now on, Marjorie Jackson, M.B.E., holder of world sprinting records, is quitting the sporting fields to become Mrs. Peter Nelson, housewife.



THE HUSBAND. Peter Nelson. At home in Adelaide. Peter has been preparing the sports store he and Marjorie have opened.

the impression that most of the photographs I had ever seen of Marjorie Jackson had done her less than justice.

She is tall, with a good figure, and slender nyloned legs which have carried her to victory in sprints all over the world. Her hair, medium brown, curled at the back of

## Our Irish parades

Our Irish fashion parades, which will be presented in Sydney in association with Mark Foy's, will be launched with a gala opening night at Prince's restaurant on Monday, October 4.

Tickets, at four guineas each, are available at the box office on the main floor of the Piazza building, Mark Foy's store, Liverpool Street.

There will be morning and afternoon parades in the Empress Ballroom at Mark Foy's from Tuesday, October 5, to Friday, October 8, commencing at 11 a.m. and 2.30 p.m.

Special business girls' sessions will be held in the Empress Ballroom at 6.30 p.m. on Friday, October 8, and at 10 a.m. on Saturday, October 9.

Tickets for all these parades are 10/- each and are also obtainable from the box office at Mark Foy's.



THE WIFE, Marjorie Jackson. Wearing the official Australian blazer and uniform for the last time, Australia's star runner arrives at Kingsford Smith Airport, Sydney, on her return from the Empire Games in Vancouver. At the airport Marjorie reiterated her determination to retire into domesticity.

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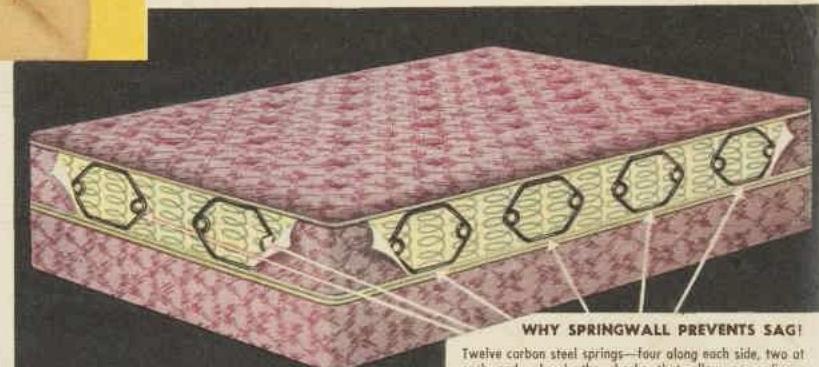


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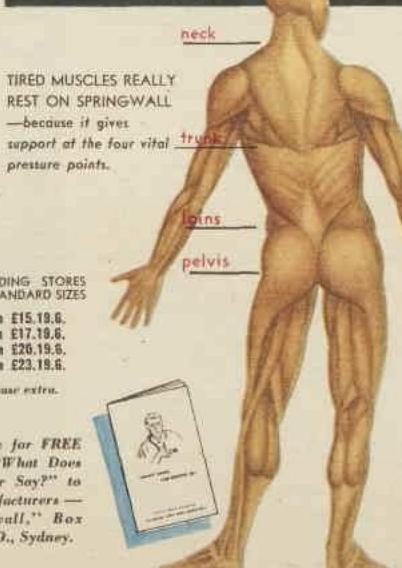
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# Background to Petrov Commission



"LANDEK," beautiful modern home built by the Herdes in Northcote Crescent, Canberra.

## Royal Commission secretary builds homes as hobby

By NAN MUSGROVE, staff writer

Australia's first spy inquiry—the Royal Commission into espionage which followed the defection of Vladimir Petrov from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—has begun its final sittings in Sydney.

EACH day the public flocks to the courtroom to listen, watch, and form their own opinion of the people who are key figures in Australia's most sensational Royal Commission.

Their eyes are generally fixed on Vladimir and Edvika Petrov and other witnesses, listening closely as the pattern of evidence emerges.

They give no thought to the complicated routine, the domestic arrangements, and the multitudinous duties behind the solemn and dignified processes of the Commission which they watch so intently.

In charge of all these important jobs, the Commission personality who draws together all the background work into a cohesive whole and literally stage-manages the Commission's sittings is Kenneth Herde, 35, the secretary of the Royal Commission.

Herde sits almost unnoticed in the courtroom at a desk immediately below the judges' bench. The present sitting of the Commission is the first one in which he has been free of the pressing problem of court accommodation.

His accommodation problems, which took him from Canberra to Sydney to Melbourne and back again to Sydney, were solved when the New South Wales Minister for Justice, Mr. Downing, made the No. 1 Court at Quarter Sessions, Darlinghurst, available to the Commission indefinitely.

In the three days prior to Mr. Downing's offer, Mr. Herde had inspected 36 public halls in Sydney and its suburbs. His suburban-hall hunt took him from Sydney's

upper North Shore to Rose Bay in the east.

Mr. Herde, who has designed and rearranged all the courtrooms used in the 22 days the Commission has sat since it began in Canberra on May 17, had a big job at the Darlinghurst court.

The prisoner's dock was removed and the trapdoor leading to the old gaol below covered to provide extra room for journalists and diplomats; jury and jury-in-waiting boxes were stripped of their fittings for other journalists, and the two jury rooms adjoining the courtroom converted as press-rooms—one for the representatives of the world's Press and the other for the Commonwealth court reporters who take a verbatim report of the proceedings.

Four days before the present sittings began Mr. Herde was faced with another accommodation problem. The Commission had to vacate its closely guarded Sydney offices and find new premises within two days.

Sydney estate agents were alerted to find an office suite containing chambers for the three Royal Commissioners, a conference room, space for security officers and Mr. Herde himself and his staff.

The suite had to be substantial, have facilities for emergency installation of telephones and other special communication equipment, and be sufficiently commodious to take not only the personnel, but the safes containing the vital Petrov papers and evidence which are constantly guarded by Commonwealth officials.

After a year in England—"It was beset sliding down the path when it snowed," said Christopher—they returned in the middle of 1952 and set to work on the house in which they have lived now for nearly a year.

located, through what he describes as a "good personal contact and a lucky fluke," the necessary suite.

In the busy months that have passed since the Petrov sensation, Mr. Herde, the Deputy-Assistant Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department as well as secretary to the Commission, has had little time for his private life.

A licensed builder, Bachelor of Economics, and the holder of a degree in accountancy, Mr. Herde has been with the Prime Minister's Department for the past four years. In that time he has spent a year in England in the United Kingdom Cabinet Office and has built two beautiful homes in Canberra.

The first home he built in Monaro Crescent, Red Hill, is now the Indonesian Embassy and is one of Canberra's show homes.

Built to Mrs. Herde's design, the 12-roomed house is gabled and reminiscent of a Cape Cod cottage.

Mr. Herde built it himself at week-ends, in lunch hours, and all his spare time. Mrs. Herde, a builder herself, helped, but, as their son, seven-year-old Christopher, explained, "She gets tired quickly digging those foundations."

They had not been in their home long when Mr. Herde was seconded to the British Civil Service and they sold their home furnished to the Indonesian Government.

Phillipa, a tiny girl who emphasises the fact that she was "four in July with a birthday," is the Herdes' baby. She goes to one of Canberra's modern play centres.



*THE CAT that causes trouble. Christopher, 7, Mrs. Herde, Phillipa, 4, and Pamela, 10, with Petrov, Pamela's cat, photographed in the living-room. Petrov causes family crises by his habit of disappearing, but so far he has returned.*



*KENNETH HERDE, right, above, secretary to the Petrov Commission, talks with the official interpreter, Colonel Arthur H. Birse, outside the Commission courtroom.*



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# ROMEO and JULIET

*Film Fan Fare*

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• Venice, with its lovely narrow streets and its broad piazza, is the screen's new background for Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet."

SHAKESPEARE, of course, placed his tragedy in "Fair Verona," towards the end of the 13th century.

Renato Castellani, the volatile Italian film director who made "Romeo and Juliet" in Ektacolor in collaboration with England's J. Arthur Rank organisation, also chose an unknown girl—Susan Shentall—as his Juliet.

But Romeo—darkly handsome Laurence Harvey (he played Romeo with this year's Stratford company)—is a seasoned romantic actor, virile, intense, and highly talented.

To Castellani, who mostly works with untrained people and hammers them into his mould, the fact that she has had no acting experience is a virtue in Miss Shentall.

Susan, who is blond, 19, and English, was discovered by a talent scout while she was dining in a London restaurant. She was handed the plum role of Juliet on a platter.

In any case, Susan, who went through the most gruelling coaching for the part of Juliet that any young girl could survive, is said to be a "natural" in the coveted role.

The English movie industry regards it as an odd circumstance that Castellani's choice for the Shakespeare heroine should be a well-bred English girl, a little mature for her nineteen years (Juliet was 14), rather sturdy for a slender flower, and perhaps a little too well-bred and reserved for the passion and poetry of Juliet.

The exacting Castellani, however, reports himself satisfied.

In Verona, the original Shakespearian setting, the story of Romeo and Juliet is still held to have had a basis of actual fact.

A tradition exists there that the lovers were buried in the crypt of the Franciscan convent of Penna Maggiore; a sarcophagus, which was removed from the ruins of that building after its destruction by fire, is still on exhibition at Verona as Juliet's Tomb.

ABOVE: The nurse (Flora Robson), at right, gives Juliet (Susan Shentall) a message. Juliet has been dancing with Romeo (Laurence Harvey).

RIGHT: Romeo doffs his mask to caress the hand of Juliet. Though their families are traditional enemies, the young people marry secretly.



COUNT PARIS (Norman Wooland), at left, is a favored suitor for the beautiful young heiress. He asks for her hand in marriage, but Juliet's thoughts are all of handsome Romeo, whom she sees for the first time that evening when he attends a reception in her home as an uninvited guest. Soon afterwards the feud between their opposed families breaks out in renewed hostility and Romeo is banished.

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1. CARNIVAL owner Charley Grayson (J. C. Flippin), right, offers Willie (Anne Baxter) a job on the recommendation of spiker Joe Mallon (Steve Cochran). Willie is irresistibly drawn to Joe.

2. HIGH-DIVER Frank Waldron (Lyle Bettger) takes Willie into his act, not knowing she is involved with handsome, brutal Joe. Willie wins number of devoted friends among the carnival folk.



3. REALISATION that Joe is a thorough-going heel prompts Willie to accept Frank's marriage proposal.

## Carnival story

★ Stark realism is the keynote of R.K.O.'s "Carnival Story," a drama of love and hate set against the rowdy background of a German fairground.

The film's central figure is Willie (Anne Baxter), a girl from nowhere, who drifts in the tide of post-war Germany until she finds refuge with a carnival.

There Willie experiences three love affairs. The first is wild and emotional. The second ends in a tragic marriage. The third offers her security.



4. THRASHING Joe because he will leave Willie alone, Frank also has fired from the carnival. Patiently, Frank builds Willie into a carnival diving



5. WIDOWED by an "accident" when Frank slips from the top rung of his ladder, Willie receives Joe's condolences. She knows he rigged the accident, but can prove nothing against him.



6. SERIOUSLY INJURED in a dangerous high dive, Willie is visited by Bill Vines (George Nader), an old friend of Frank's. He tries to persuade her to give up the carnival and marry him.



7. ABOVE. During a rendezvous with Joe, Willie realises that his old power over her has gone completely. Joe admits his part in Frank's death and tries to implicate her.



8. RIGHT. Strong-man Groppo (Ali Berber), who is devoted to Willie, rescues her from Joe and kills him. Willie and Bill leave the carnival to start a new life.

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## Talking of Films

By M. J. McMAHON

### Beat the Devil

HERE'S a film that will amuse you or leave you utterly baffled.

Filmed by director John ("African Queen"). Huston around the beautiful coastline of southern Italy, "Beat the Devil" is a wacky spoof of mystery adventure films and of the familiar characters who invariably appear in them.

The script, written by Huston in collaboration with Truman Capote, contains flashes of brilliant dialogue.

However, for rank-and-file filmgoers the overall effect of a confused story, episodic action to which there seems to be no rhyme or reason, and of off-beat character work is probably of fair comedy.

Huston rounded up a top-flight international cast of actors for his film. It includes Humphrey Bogart, more amiable than usual, but right in character as a crook concerned in a deal to get posse-

### OUR FILM GRADINGS

- ★★★ Excellent
- ★★ Above average
- ★ Average
- No stars—below average or not yet reviewed.

sion of uranium-bearing land in East Africa.

Britain's Robert Morley is the gang mastermind. His henchmen include Peter Lorre and Ivor Barnard's terrifying little British major.

On the feminine side there are Jennifer Jones, odd-looking in an unflattering blond wig, and lovely Italian Gina Lollobrigida, both entering whole-heartedly into the spirit of proceedings which develop out of the swindle planned by the gang.

Last but by no means least in effectiveness is the wicked parody of a low-born English snob sketched by British actor Edward Underdown.

In Sydney — Mayfair.

### CITY FILM GUIDE

#### Films reviewed

CAPITOL.—★★ "The Wild One," drama, starring Marlon Brando, Mary Murphy. Plus "Flame of Calcutta," technicolor period adventure, starring Patric Knowles, Denise Darcel, Paul Cavanagh.

CENTURY.—★★ "The Moon is Blue," comedy, starring William Holden, Maggie McNamara, David Niven. Plus featurettes.

EMBASSY.—★★ "Hobson's Choice," comedy, starring Charles Laughton, Brenda de Banzie, John Mills. Plus featurettes.

ESQUIRE.—★ "They Who Dare," technicolor war drama, starring Dirk Bogarde, Denholm Elliott. Plus featurettes.

LYCEUM.—★★ "Johnny Dark," technicolor thriller, starring Tony Curtis, Piper Laurie, Don Taylor. Plus ★★ "Fireman, Save My Child," starring Spike Jones and his City Slickers.

LYRIC.—★★ "Gun Fury," technicolor Western, starring Rock Hudson, Donna Reed, Phil Carey. Plus ★ "Convicted," prison drama, starring Glenn Ford, Broderick Crawford, Dorothy Malone. (Both re-releases.)

MAYFAIR.—★ "Beat the Devil," mystery satire, starring Jennifer Jones, Humphrey Bogart, Robert Morley. (See review this page.) Plus featurettes.

PALACE.—★ "Devil's Canyon," technicolor period drama, starring Virginia Mayo, Dale Robertson. Plus "Superman at Scotland Yard," mystery, starring George Reeves.

PARK.—★ "Wicked Woman," drama, starring Beverley Michaels, Richard Egan. Plus featurettes.

PRINCE EDWARD.—★★ "Knock on Wood," comedy, starring Danny Kaye, Mai Zetterling. Plus featurettes.

REGENT.—★ "River of No Return," technicolor CinemaScope adventure, starring Marilyn Monroe, Robert Mitchum, Rory Calhoun. Plus featurettes.

STATE.—★★ "The Red Beret," World War II technicolor drama, starring Alan Ladd, Susan Stephens, Leo Genn. Plus ★ "Cruisin' Down the River," technicolor musical, starring Dick Haymes, Billy Daniels.

ST. JAMES.—★★ "The Student Prince," technicolor CinemaScope romantic musical, starring Ann Blyth, Edmund Purdom. Plus featurettes.

VARIETY.—★★ "The Walls of Malapaga," French language drama, starring Isa Miranda, Jean Gabin. Plus ★ "School for Wives," comedy, starring Herbert Lom, Hugh McDermott, Brenda Bruce.

VICTORY.—★ "Here Come the Girls," technicolor musical, starring Bob Hope, Arlene Dahl, Rosemary Clooney. Plus ★ "Flight to Tangier," technicolor drama, starring Joan Fontaine, Jack Palance.

#### Films not yet reviewed

PLAZA.—"Man in the Attic," thriller, starring Jack Palance, Constance Smith, Byron Palmer. Plus "Amazon Quest," murder mystery, starring Tom Neal, Carole Mathews.

SAVOY.—"Marriage of Figaro," German opera, starring Angelika Hauff, Willi Domgraf-Fassbender. Plus ★★ "Beauty and the Beast," French-language fantasy, starring Jean Marais, Josette Day. (Re-release.)



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THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — August 25, 1954

# Finch scores again as thief and drunken planter

Australian Peter Finch's stylish playing of G. K. Chesterton's international crook, Flambeau, in the recently premiered film "Father Brown," has brought him a new wave of praise in Britain.

AND he has earned it against the formidable acting opposition of Alec Guinness, the master of character.

Not only are the critics handing him all the major laurels in his newest starring film; they've made it a double welcome, saying that Finch supplies a quality that British films lack sadly. He is romantic, sensitive, and with an enormous appeal for women.

Peter has always said that his part as Flambeau, the thief, in "Father Brown," would provide him with one of his best opportunities, and he was right. Now he says, "It was by far my best part in films. The character is showy, flamboyant, and many sided."

To consolidate this success, Paramount's "Elephant Walk," in which Finch stars with Elizabeth Taylor and Dana Andrews, is due to hit the British screen at any moment.

Already "Elephant Walk" has had solid success in New York, but for himself Peter Finch doubts that it will be as

trenchant a follow-up as he could wish. For in it he plays the brutal, sombre, drunken tea-planter husband of Elizabeth Taylor. The romantic laurels mantle Dana Andrews.

But Peter's greatest hopes are pinned on the film he has just finished. It will be ready for showing to the world very soon. It is called "Make Me An Offer," adapted from the best-selling novel of Wolf Mankowitz.

It is the story of a young antique dealer's search for beauty—his vision of the ultimate in beauty is condensed in the form of a missing Portland vase and it is told with great wit and charm against the romantic underworld of the antique-dealing trade.

He told me, "It is without a doubt the best film I've ever acted in. It is adult. One might say, if one weren't a little frightened of using words, truly artistic. It is the longest part I've ever had, since I'm in every scene but one. So if anyone takes a dislike to me in the first five minutes, he is in for a bad evening.

"Director Cyril Frankel is, I think, one of the most able and most stimulating directors I've ever worked for. In fact, the whole of 'Group Three' Studios, where we made the film, is exciting and alive with rising talent and new ideas. It is fun because they all know they're going somewhere. Rosalie Crutchley, who plays my wife in 'Make Me An Offer,' is a splendid actress."

But even to virile "Group Three," Peter Finch, in his moments of frankness and realism, was a little staggering. For instance, the scene called for him to kiss Rosalie Crutchley. Peter gathered a handful of her hair, drew her head back, and planted a hefty and meaningful kiss on her mouth. Watchers gasped.

"What's wrong?" said Finch, sensing the astonishment. The director recovered his breath. "Well, nothing, old boy. Absolutely nothing! Only—I don't think I've ever seen it done like that in England before."

Then to celebrate the completion of filming, and with

From a staff correspondent in London

startled columnists taking strong note of the impact he made on the screen, Peter Finch went off to a holiday retreat. He and his wife, Tamara, set out on a walking tour of Devon and Cornwall, then at their loveliest under the English summer sun.

"We have no plans," he told me beforehand. "We'll just amble from village to village, keeping near the sea."

Australian actor Alan White and his wife, Gloria, went with them.

"Then," Peter said, "we fly to Spain for another walk-about. Why walking? Well, one reason—I've got to get some fat off."

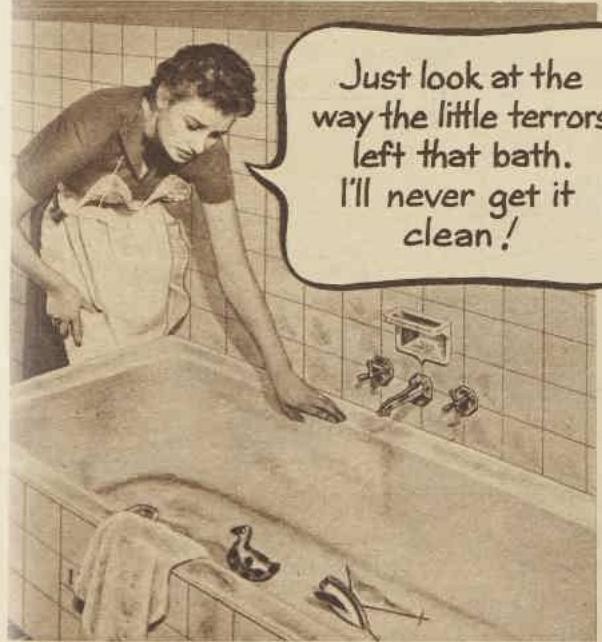
And offers for Peter Finch keep rolling in. "The last film I made was what I call my 'left-hand' work—the sort of work you like doing for its own sake whether it pays well or not. Now I am to do a CinemaScope - technicolor - historical-type of film. It's called 'The Black Prince.' I've got the big villain's part—De Ville, the French knight who refuses to acknowledge defeat. Not a bad part at all."

"Which hand would you call it?" I asked him.

Peter shot me a you-know-very-well look. "Well," he admitted and grinned, "kind of on the right hand, I'd say."



PETER FINCH'S must be the most "discovered" talent in British films. It's happened to him again following a first-rate performance as the thief, Flambeau, in "Father Brown."



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# DAME MARY GILMORE

*Australia's pioneer woman writer enters her 90th year*

• Australia's famous pioneer woman writer, social reformer, and politician, Dame Mary Gilmore, was 89 this week.

TO mark her entry into her 90th year, Dame Mary selected a poem for us from her latest book of verse, "Fourteen Men," as appropriate for her birthday:

Let time run forward as it will,  
The backward look still keep  
What time would leave behind!  
Mark how the water ripples where  
Upon the face of ocean shines  
The moon, and how her rays  
make visible  
The unilluminated, all-embracing deep!  
So on the waves of life's fantastic sea  
Shines memory—  
The mind's reflecting satellite.

Small, brown-eyed, and many-haired, Dame Mary lives among her many books in a King's Cross flat.

When I arrived at the flat she was tired, but she welcomed me into the living-room where she works at a desk under the window.

She likes to remember the Sydney of the old days and spoke of Woolloomooloo as she knew it when she was young. She counted out the syllables of Woolloomooloo on her fingers.

"The correct pronunciation," she said, "is Wulla Mulla, and means the place where the young kangaroos feed."

"And I can recollect father taking us to watch the young kangaroos feeding on the opposite hillside leading up, to what is now Victoria Street."

Indicating the room, she said, "Where you are sitting now was Dr. Scott-Skirving's cow paddock in my teens. It had a two-rail fence around it, thistles, and a couple of cows."

"When I was still small a friend of father's, a Mr. Greenwood, had his home with a paddock around it on the spot where the King's Cross fire station now is."

"Behind was a windmill which was grinding the wheat of Sydney."

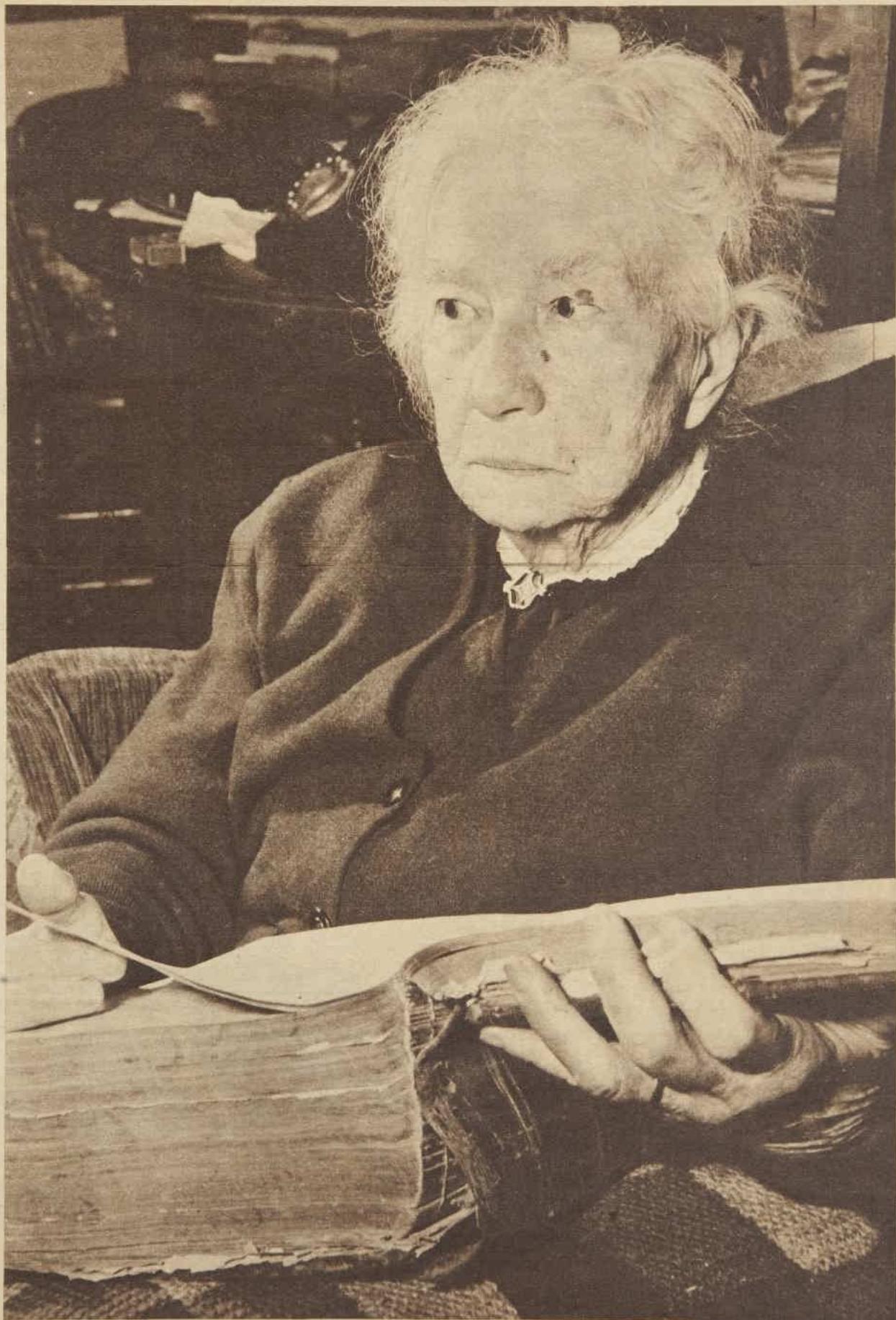
Not content to sit back and take a well-deserved rest after many years of activity, Dame Mary is vitally interested in people, and likes to help and encourage young writers.

She rarely goes out, but keeps open house in her flat.

"I have a lot of friends coming and going," she smiled, "and they often stay in the spare room, sometimes for several weeks."

"And I have a housekeeper who comes in once a week and does the flat and my shopping for me."

—JANET BAILEY.



# SUMMER HATS



• Casual visor hat (left) in white pique. The crown is made like a little girl's sunbonnet, tying in at the back with bow ends, which, like the brim, are lined with bright blue grosgrain. Lovely with cotton dresses.

• Droop-brimmed brow-skimmer (top) in chalk-white panama. The high crown is swathed with purple chiffon.

• Tiny gold straw pancake (above) edged with a flattering frill of black ribbon velvet that finishes on one side in loops and trailing ends. Worn straight on the head.

• The big becoming sailor hat returns dramatically this summer. In this season's favored natural leghorn straw, this model is trimmed with rich cherry-red velvet.

• The Breton sailor (right) also makes a comeback this summer, mostly in rough, colored straw. Worn on the back of the head, this sailor has a perky bow at the back with softly falling ends. Wear it with suits or frocks.

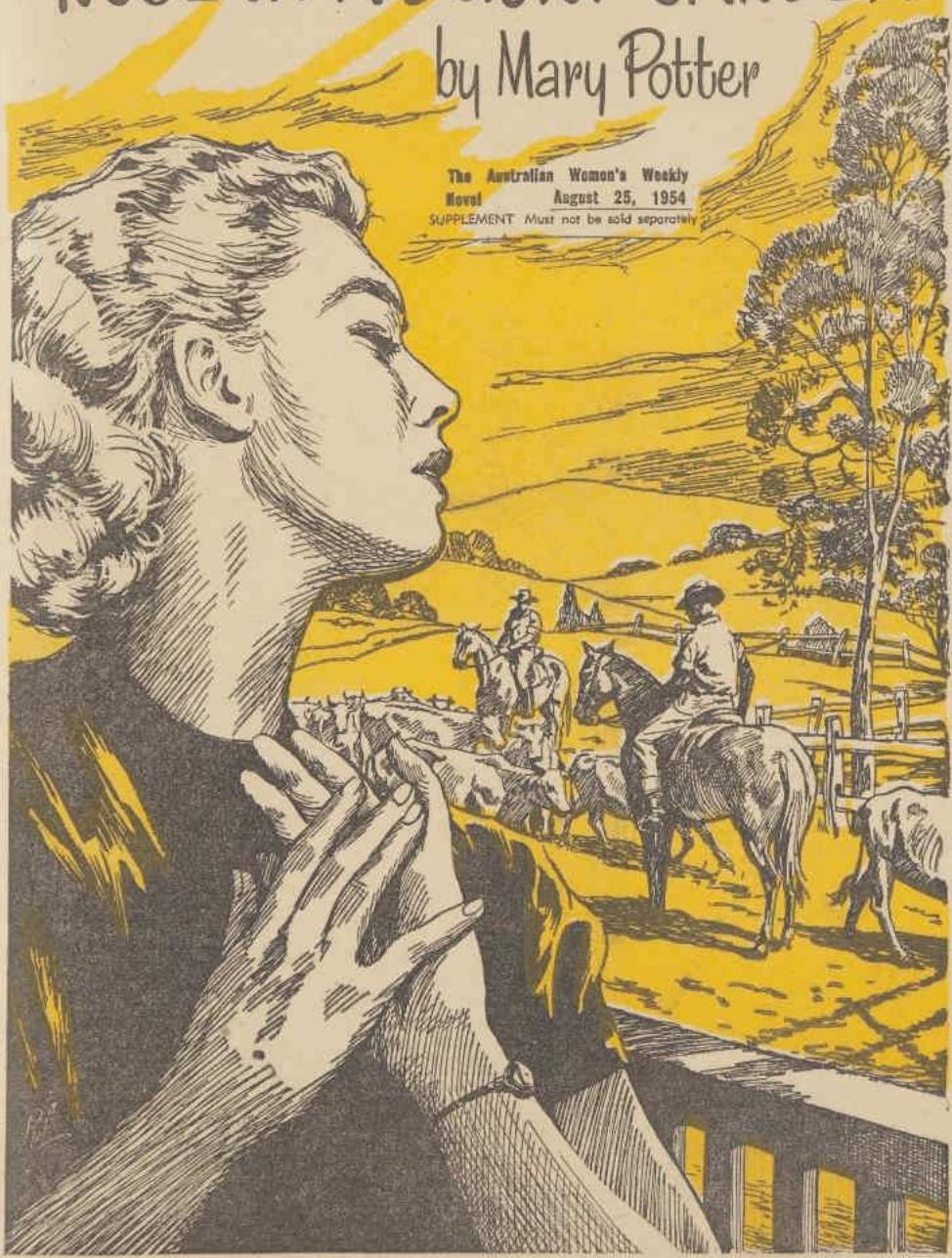
RSME

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — August 25, 1951

# ROSE IN A DUSKY GARDEN

by Mary Potter

The Australian Woman's Weekly  
Novel August 25, 1954  
SUPPLEMENT Must not be sold separately





### ROSE IN A DUSKY GARDEN

Page 3

George out at the turn-off, taking a footpath at his large bundle.

"That thing heavy, George?" he asked. "I'll give you a lift along to the agent's with if you like. Didn't know you had near as many skins as that."

"No, no it's not heavy, Mac," Welles assured him hastily. "It's only the clumsy way I've bundled them together makes 'em look a lot. I'll be coming you."

"Suppose you'll be here about six on Monday mornin'. My old lights ain't too good now, so I won't venture out on Sunday night. So long."

When Welles had gone a few paces he called after him: "Don't forget Annie's aspirations." Then his old rattletrap gave its usual jerk forward and he was off.

Welles did not go to the agent's with his skins. He carried his pack on his shoulder to the hotel, planted it in a corner of the bar and proceeded to look about him.

"Hello George!" "Good-day George!" greeted him on all sides, for George was "one of the boys." "What're you with George?"

"Good-day Andy! Day Bob! How goes it Barney?" Seen anything of Dinsmore?"

"Nuh. He ain't in yet, but 'e will be," said the barman as he poured him a drink.

George turned his handsome face in a frithing pot. But he did not stay, with his foot on the bar rail for half the afternoon, drinking and yarning and joking, as he was wont to do. Today there was an air of purpose about him and having slaked his thirst he went along to the store and made the purchases requested by Mrs. Best.

He made the lot up into one parcel then borrowed a sheet of newspaper, an envelope and a pencil, wrote a note which he addressed to Sandy McCubbin.

It simply informed him that circumstances over which he had no control had arisen that would prevent him from going back to Laralara at present. He would write a separate explanation to the boss meanwhile here was the parcel for the station, and would Sandy be good enough next time he came in to throw his suitcase (already packed) on to the train and consign it freight forward to Morowa.

He gave a small boy a shilling and instructed him to deliver the note and the parcel to Sandy McCubbin on Monday morning at 6 am.

Then we went back to the hotel. Dinsmore was not in the bar, so George went along to see if his truck was out back. As he passed down the hall a girl ran out from one of the parlors.

"George," she cried. "Come on in here George. All the gang are here. What have you been doing with yourself George? I haven't seen you for a month. Must have a girl out there, eh?"

"No fear," said George with his winning smile. "Been mighty busy, that's all. But I'll be right back, got to find a bloke out here. I'll be seeing you." And he gave her arm an intimate squeeze as he pushed her gently aside.

Dinsmore's truck was outside and Dinsmore in it was making ready to go on to Morowa.

"Got room for me Dinn?" asked Welles.

"Uh hum," was the reply. "Goin' right away though."

"Suits me. Just a sec till I get my gear."

To save running into Molly Smith again he took the long way round,

through the street, gathered up his sack, and returned to the truck.

"Hello" said Dinsmore when he saw the size of his sack. "Looks as if you're going to stay."

"Yes, that's right. I'm pulling out from Laralara. I've had it out there."

"Got any place in view?"

"No. Think I'll go north. Better opportunities up there for a stockman I think."

"Yes. No doubt about it. And who's taking your place at Laralara?"

"That's their look out."

Dinsmore gave him a glance, but said nothing. He knew George. He was the sort that ran away from things. Just what, he wondered, was he running away from now?

**W**HEN McCubbin found the boy waiting for him on Monday morning with Welles' note, he grinned a knowing grin. He was not surprised. He had not worked with Welles for two years without knowing the stuff of which he was made, and he had not been so dull or so preoccupied with his own affairs this last few months not to know what was going on between Welles and Annie Kilmer.

And now the blighter had cleared out and left them all to the lurch, but most of all, Annie! Poor old Annie, a decent girl, too; not one of those fibberby gibbertys like Molly Smith.

And the poor thing had probably thought he meant it and intended to marry her.

He felt to wondering why a sensible girl like Annie should fall for a useless piece of goods like Welles. For Annie was not like other girls. She'd held herself in a prim reserve, and seemed a cut above the general run ... and he'd thought because she was plain and over thirty that she was proof against romance ... well, well, he'd never known women.

It seemed as if they were all alike down under, and there was some soft weakness that made them hanker after glamor boys like Welles ... pity she had to do a silly thing like this now, you could understand it in the young, but Annie.

"Poor Annie," he soliloquised. "the better the woman the harder she falls ... I don't half like takin' the bad news—it'll be like throwin' a bomb at her."

There was no doubt about the consternation at Laralara when McCubbin threw his bomb. Welles would not be coming back! They seemed unable to believe it, not because they'd any way lamented him, but one and all seemed to understand what it would mean to Annie.

For much as they had tried to keep their affair secret — Welles for reasons of pure caution, Annie, because she could not in her heart feel proud of the part she was playing — it was known to everyone on the place, right down to Arnold, the lad. And now a suspicion that had been hovering in the minds of most of them, suddenly became confirmed.

Mrs. Best wept copiously and went on as if Annie had been her daughter, giving her opinion of "that blagart" in an uncertain terms.

Annie quietly fainted.

And now she was lying on her bed, where Bert had carried her and laid her down as tenderly as if he had been her mother, for Mrs. Best had quite gone to pieces in the emergency, and there was nothing else that he could do. He had bathed her hands and face and poured some water through her white lips and now stood watching as consciousness returned to her pale face.

Mrs. Best, now very much restored, put her head in the doorway.

"Is she comin' round Bert?" she asked anxiously.

"Yes," he reassured her. "Yes she's coming round nicely now, Mrs. Best, but I think someone should stay with her for a while."

Bert spoke with the correctness of the mission-taught boy, and his voice was soft and pleasant.

Just then a yell sounded from that part of the homestead usually referred to as "The House," meaning the boss' quarters, and Mrs. Best looked worried.

"You stay with her, Bert," she said. "You're a good boy. I gutter go," and she scurried away in the direction of the house.

Bert took the cold hands and clasped them between his, looking round appreciatively the while at Annie's spidless room. That was one of the things about Annie that he admired; she was so spotless and wholesome and tidy.

Even though it was only 7 o'clock in the morning, there was scarcely a thing out of place in this room, and on the cheap dressing table there were white lace-edged mats, the pillow that held her head had a lace frill, while on the floor were rugs that he knew she had worked herself.

Bert had lived all his life among whites. Born in a mission where his mother had died, he had been brought up by the white Fathers, looked up to them and revered them, and tried with all the power of his soul to be like them.

He had always been of an exceptionally serious and intelligent turn of mind; loved order and beauty and strangely, the ways of his own people had no appeal for him. He longed for a home like white boys, and in manhood, for a white man's home.

Annie had always seemed to him the very acme of womanly charm and virtue. Her austerity and gentility, her neatness and cleanliness, and her gentle kindness to himself had placed her far above other women in his estimation. The only reason he believed, that she had not married was because she had found no one worthy of her.

It had troubled him very much when she had become infatuated with Welles' charms, because he knew that Welles was a poor sort of white man, but it had never occurred to him that Welles would desert her like this.

"Do not be so upset, Annie," he comforted her. "He will come back. I am sure he will. I think Mac has got the story wrong. He would not give up a good place like this, where he is head stockman, and he surely would not be such a fool as to give you up. He will come back in a day or two. I feel sure."

But Annie was not comforted. She knew that Bert was too simple for Welles, and his words carried no conviction. But she still had a very strong sense of propriety, and it did not seem to her the sort of thing she ought to discuss with Bert, so she said:

"I'll be all right now, Bert. I'll be here for a few minutes, and then I'll go out and go on with my work as usual. You better not waste any more time here, you'll be short-handed now, won't you?"

"Oh no," he said. "We're not going to miss Welles so much as you might think. Welles was lazy, and Sandy and Ben and I could do without him easily. I'll see if I can do something for Mrs. Best and let her come in to you."

Left to herself, Annie's mind went back to its problem. What was she going to do? What was she going to do? What was she going to do?

She tossed her head wearily from side to side in an agony of despair.

## ROSE IN A DUSKY GARDEN

Supplement to The Australian  
Women's Weekly—August 23, 1951

self-abnegation . . . How was she going to live now? Life had not been too grand for her before always passed over and denied the things that any woman's heart craved.

But at least she had been honored and respected. Now she would be the laughing-stock of Wagga.

She began thinking about her family.

The Kilmers had always held their heads high and thought something of themselves, and it was her father's proud boast that of his nine—five boys and four girls—not one of them had ever disgraced him.

The tears began to flow again as she thought of them. Her very leaving of them had been an act of rebellion. Being the youngest she was expected to stay at home. Laura and Clara worked in Norham; one in an office and one in a shop. Isobel, the eldest, had married a farmer; she automatically became the housekeeper, the unpaid servant of them all. She stuck it till she was 28, then suggested that Laura stay at home and give her a spell.

What! Laura give up her good office job? Her family were aghast at the idea. Besides what could she do? She had learned nothing but housework, surely she did not want to go out as a servant?

It was exactly what she did want. Anything at all to get away and have "her chance" in life. It would never come to her staying at home, she thought. There had been arguments, but in the end she won. She had obtained that post at Larnara, and been there ever since.

But she had been so strictly brought up that she was unable to escape from herself. She could not lose her old inhibitions, and the womanly virtues she prized so much failed to attract the men she encountered on the station.

Had she been able to relax and laugh and joke with them it might have been very different. But she pinned her faith on dignity and virtue and lost. They laughed at her behind her back, called her "old Ann" and the "Old Maid".

All that is, except those who really knew her worth. Sandy and Bert and a few of the other steady hands, and Mrs. Best loved her as a daughter. But even they were under the impression that Annie was not interested in men.

And then Welles had come with his good looks and his smooth talking. He had at first been flattered by the deferential way she addressed him as "Mr." and by the fact that a flush overspread her face when he addressed her. He realised that she had "fallen" for him, and took some pains to talk to her, and that was how it began.

How proud and happy she had been! How proud would she be to take this handsome man and show him off to her family; such a husband as neither of her sisters had. And her faith in herself and in her destiny had been fulfilled.

Believing implicitly in him, she had yielded wholly to his spell, afraid that she would lose him.

Even when she realised her predicament, she had not dreamed that she would be deserted. Had he not talked freely of marriage and a "small place of our own?"

But the last few days she had noticed an ominous change in Welles. There was no mistaking it, and when Sandy came back with the news of his departure she realised that she had been half expecting something of the sort.

What a fool she had been! What a fool. What a fool. The words kept repeating themselves in her brain monotonously as she beat

her head from side to side on the pillow.

She wished she would die. The thought of death was very sweet. If only she could manage to make it look like an accident. Drowning? The creeks and rivers were dry at this time of the year, but there was the big dam in the paddock.

Yes, that was it. Simple as ABC.

Having made up her mind to this, she heaved a sigh of relief, turned on her side and went to sleep; the first real sleep she had had for days.

She slept soundly all the morning, and awakened much refreshed. It was as if a storm that had been long threatening had at last broken and brought relief. The relief was the resolution that she carried locked in her brain; the resolution to find rest and relief. Why had she never thought of this before?

At tea time she even laughed and joked a little, and all of them, looking at her, knew that this was not the old Annie.

But it was short lived, this spirit of gaiety and all the aspiring she had taken would not make her sleep. So she got up out on her wrapper and went out into the yard. She was restless and impatient for the morrow and the culmination of her great decision.

**I**T was much cooler outside, and the moonlight shone on everything with a soft radiance. Annie walked along, feeling strangely as if she were already dead, and walking in a spirit world where nothing moved but herself.

It was so still and calm and cool that she walked without noticing or caring where she went. Automatically she followed a well-worn track for more than half a mile, then struck a bank and found herself standing among a clump of trees that hung over and dipped into the waters of the dam.

She stood there looking out over the water with the moonlight and the trees reflected in its depth. How cool and pleasant it looked in there. How simple to wade in here and just sink into these cool depths.

Anyone might go for a dip on a hot night like this. The men swam here, she knew, but she had never gone near it, and anyway she was unable to swim.

She stood there a long time looking at the shimmering water, persuading herself for the effort. For now that the time had come he was putting forth claims.

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It was not so easy as she had thought.

But she must, she told herself, she simply must.

She walked in irresolutely. The water felt cold, in contrast to her warm body, and she gave a little gasp and caught her breath, but she went on, walking through mud and slime, her feet sinking into it sickeningly. Then suddenly there was nothing under her feet, and she went down with a plunge, down, down.

She came to on the bank, with Bert moving her arms up and down, up and down. He stopped when he saw that she was breathing normally, and turned her over on to her back.

She sat up and looked at him wonderingly. "Where was she? What had happened?"

"Are you better now, Annie?" he asked. "I had come up here for a swim, and I just saw you go under. I don't think you were under for more than a few seconds, but you gave me an awful fright."

So that was it. Bert had rescued her, and her great effort had been in vain. She had gone to the bottom all that business of dying, and here she was

just where she had started. She burst into tears.

"Oh Bert," she cried. "Why didn't you leave me alone? I would now have been out of it all and so painlessly. Why have you dragged me back to all my misery?"

Bert stroked her wet hair gently. "Listen, Annie," he said in his soft voice. "There is no need for you to worry any more. Let me take care of you. I am half white, and even my black half is of the same race, but primitive. I have always tried to be like your folk. I can work as well as any one of them. I have some money saved. If you would consent to marry me I will look after you and the little one." He paused briefly.

"You can have your own little home and be independent, and no one will say you have not a husband nor the little one a father. I will be its father, and it will want for nothing. Oh Annie, I have always wanted you, but I would not speak because I was not half worthy. But do, perhaps, in your need you will think of me and take me."

He had brushed the wet hair away from her face, and now he continued to stroke her forehead, her cheeks, with a slow gentle touch as of velvet. It and his words had a soothing effect. The convulsive sobs ceased and she lay still; she was intensely weary, and in another minute would have been asleep.

"Come," he said, lifting her gently to her feet. "You must go to your room and sleep. Think over what I have said to you, and remember you are not deserted nor shamed as long as I am by to look after you."

Like one in a dream she allowed him to lead her down the bank of the dam, along the track, into the house yard and off to the verandah. Her wet garments clung to her limbs as though pasted on, but she seemed oblivious of them. All she knew now was that she was tired, too tired almost to move one foot after the other.

She allowed him to lead her into her room, where he turned on the now dim electric light.

The great heat had died down and it was now quite chilly. He covered the now shivering woman in her blankets, then went out to the kitchen. The fire was still warm, and in a few minutes he had stirred it up and heated some milk. He then returned to the bedroom, and putting his arm round Annie's shoulders, he raised her to a sitting posture.

"Come, Annie, drink this," he said, a new note of authority in his voice. And Annie, of whom he had always been in awe, obeyed him like a little child.

He covered her again in her blankets. She was far too exhausted, he could see, to venture out again that night. It would be quite safe to leave her.

He went out of the house, and walked slowly down to the men's quarters. A great exultation filled him. He had tonight done what he had longed for and dreamed of, but never thought to do.

He had proposed marriage to a white woman, and although she had not said yes, she had not said no. She had seemed content that he should take charge of her, and he felt that that would be her attitude henceforth.

A white woman, and no down-at-heels shtern at that, but Annie Kilmer, the cleanest, neatest, most virtuous woman in the midlands. In his eyes she had not sinned. She had trusted a man who had betrayed her, that was all.

He was more than happy to have that trust transferred to himself.

Annie did not know what to do.

the next. She was content to lie on

## ROSE IN A DUSKY GARDEN

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her bed in a half stupor, a period of transition from which she emerged sane and resigned to a new set of standards.

What if Bert was colored? He was, as he said, half white, and far more decent and honest than many white men. Didn't everyone on Laralara know that? Bert was thoroughly respected everywhere he was known. Marrying him would not at all be like marrying an ordinary half-caste.

And he loved and looked up to her. That was a great deal. Plenty of women with white husbands could not say that. Thus she weighed the pros and cons as she lay there recovering her strength. She would have to give up her own family, of course, but how welcome would she have been to them with an illegitimate baby?

So, on the third day when she emerged and took up her duties again she was quite ready to say yes to Bert's proposal.

Bert was in a seventh heaven of delight. They sat out on the rustic seat under the pepper tree that night and laid their plans.

Bert had decided to see Mr. Steelman and ask for Welles' job. There was no logical reason why he should not have it. He had been there so long, he knew it all so well. And Mr. Steelman knew how reliable he was.

It would mean that they could have the cottage that was there for the use of the overseer, should he chance to be a married man. It was only a small cottage, but it would do them for a start, anyway. Bert had not the slightest doubt that he would get it.

But he was doomed to disappointment. Mr. Steelman was good-hearted and quite a kind employer, but for the natives he had little time. Their point of view never occurred to him.

Bert was both surprised and hurt. He knew that he had done the work of an overseer on the place and made up for many a slacker. Surely the boss must know it, too.

"Is there any special reason why you won't give me the job, sir?" he asked respectfully.

"Yes, I may as well tell you straight, Bert that there is," said Steelman. "I've nothing against you personally at all, you've been a good man and I don't want to lose your services. But hang it all you must know yourself it would never do. As overseer you'd be over the other men and you know white men won't have a colored man over them."

It was straight between the eyes and it knocked the fight out of Bert. "Yes," he said. "I see. I hadn't thought of that. Yes, I suppose you're right. I'm afraid then I'll have to look for another place, sir."

"Why do you have to do that?" said Steelman. "You're just as well off here as any other place. I pay you the regulation wage just the same as a white man."

"Yes, oh, yes," said Bert. "But I want to get married and I'll have to have a place to live in."

"Ugh, married, eh?" Steelman grunted, not too pleased. He didn't want to start a small black—or half-black colony at Laralara and have all sorts of relations and friends paying them visits. Up to this, Bert had been very satisfactory in that respect; he'd kept away from his racial brethren.

"And who are you marrying?"

"Annie, sir. Annie Kilmer," said Bert with pride in his voice.

Steelman took the pipe out of his mouth and looked at him with a frown of disbelief.

"Annie Kilmer," he echoed in astonishment.

"Yes, sir, and, of course, I'll have

to go where I can get her a decent home."

Steelman was silent a moment, then he said: "Well, all I can say is that you're getting a jolly good wife, and I hope you realize it."

"I do, sir," said Bert humbly. "It's all the same to you, sir. I'll stay on for a week or two till I have something in view."

"Yes yes — er, well we might be able to arrange for the two of you to stay on. There's no one in the cottage at present and if the new overseer's not a married man, there's no reason why you shouldn't stay there, and Annie might be able to carry on with her old job for a time at least . . . But about that other, the position is just the same. I can't have any but a white man in authority."

"Very well, sir. I'll see what Annie says about it."

Mr. Steelman was disturbed. He had always had a high regard for Annie and felt they were fortunate in having such a highly respectable as well as efficient servant. To learn that she was now about to marry a colored man was a distinct shock.

"Heavens," he said as he picked up his pipe and began to light it. "One never knows what's going to happen next these days. Annie Kilmer marrying a black. The woman must be out of her senses . . . Well, well."

If his own half-sister, Cynthia Fave, had done something similar he would not have been so surprised. Cynthia was of the unpredictable present-day youth, but Annie was of the old and settled variety of whom he expected better things.

He closed his book and went through on to the verandah, where his wife and her sister-in-law were lounging in deck chairs listening to the radio.

"Turn that thing off a minute," he said abruptly. "I want to talk."

There was no light but the half-light of the stars; electric light bulbs were purposely left unlighted on account of insects but he could plainly see their white frocks, their carefree lounging attitudes, and they would just as easily sense something tense with him.

"Why, whatever's the matter, John? Was that someone with you in the office just now?" asked his wife.

"Yes, it was Bert. He was after Welles' job of overseer. And what do you think he told me? He's getting married, to Annie!"

**T**HE bombshell fell somewhat flat, for Mrs. Steelman was silent, but Cynthia said, with a note of amusement in her voice: "Oh, so that's the latest development, is it?"

"You don't sound very surprised!" He sounded injured. "I must say I'm quite horrified. I thought Annie was different, quite superior to that sort of thing . . . I thought she had good people somewhere or other."

But Mrs. Steelman had had the story from Mrs. Best that very day. They had had a talk about the work that had not gone well lately, and Mrs. Best had had to tell the truth.

"So you see, my dear, there isn't much else poor Annie can do," she had said at the end of her recital. "I'm sorry for her, and I hate to lose her, but for the last two or three weeks she's been quite stupid and not seemed to know what she was doing."

Now, Mrs. Steelman told the story.

"Hm. So that's it," said Steelman thoughtfully.

"It's pretty decent of Bert, eh? I've told him they can live in the cottage, and that Annie may keep on at her job as long as she's able."

"Oh," cried Cynthia, sitting up to

attention: "So you gave him the job; decent of you, John, though he's a first-class stockman."

"Hm-er, not exactly," he said a little uncomfortably for he felt that somehow the white man was not coming out of this affair too well. "You know it's against my policy to have a native in a position of authority. He's to stay on at his present status. I can't do more for them than that."

"No," said his wife. "It's a queer affair, the whole thing. I don't know why that Welles couldn't have stayed and married her. He'd never get a better wife if he scoured the country, but I suppose he'd want a glamour girl."

"Well, I think," said Cynthia, "that she's getting the better man of the two."

"Yes," agreed Mrs. Steelman. "I daresay she is, and it might be all right. But think of the future."

The telephone rang just then, and Steelman left them to go and answer it.

It was Briggs, the stock agent. He had a good line of young ewes; man had to sell on account of the water position; beautiful stuff and cheap . . . Up near Geraldton. Would he care to come and inspect. Yes? Well, he'd meet him first thing in the morning at Wagin . . . say 7 a.m. He wouldn't regret it . . . well, till tomorrow then.

Steelman went to bed full of anticipation of his trip of the following day. He became the keen stock hunter again, on the scent of a good bargain, and Annie and the native problem were for the time completely forgotten.

Bert was disappointed and hurt into the bargain, but he knew that nothing was to be gained by sulking. He also realized that he would gain nothing by staying on at Laralara. Even the cottage would be taken from them if they happened to get a married overseer, and that might happen any time.

But Bert had a plan in his head, and after he had left Annie that night he took out his writing-pad and pen and set about writing a very important letter.

About six months prior to this there had been a visitor at Laralara, recuperating after an illness; a Mr. Bernard Roberts, who was a solicitor in Perth.

Mr. Roberts had taken a great interest in the station, and was eager to ride over every inch of it, so Mr. Steelman had given Bert the job of taking him round, since he knew the place far better than anyone else, and could be relied on to look after his guest.

On one occasion they had passed quite close to the railway line, and Mr. Roberts had talked about the work of maintaining it.

At parting he had given Bert a handsome silver-mounted riding-whip and a fountain-pen and had said: "If ever I go on the trip that I'm always going to take to Central Australia, I'll take you, Bert, and we'll go bush together."

Bert had often thought of that, and wondered if he meant it. But no further word had come from him. Now, however, he thought of something else. He could do any job that a white man could do, and he wondered would they take a colored man on the railway line.

So he wrote to Mr. Roberts, and asked him if, in view of the fact that he was getting married, he could do anything about getting him a job in Wagin as a foreman on the line.

He spent the Sunday cleaning out and doing up the cottage for they planned to be married on the following Saturday in Geraldton. Annie had written to the minister.

Friday arrived. The boss was still away chasing sheep bargains, for one had led to another. Bert, therefore,

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Supplement to The Australian  
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had to ask Mrs. Steelman for the time off to get married, as did Annie. So they set off on Saturday noon, with McCubbin, for Wogina, and took the evening train from there to Geraldton. The minister had answered Annie's letter and promised to arrange for accommodation with a private family for them.

He turned out to be a man who had had much experience with the Inland Mission and, therefore, understood and sympathised with the native problem. And he tactfully refrained from showing his surprise at finding that the woman was white and the man colored, a most unusual circumstance. He soon saw that they were a very worthy couple and did everything in his power to make them comfortable and happy.

At the boarding house, though there were two other couples—both whites, no difference was made in their treatment. But Annie could see the curious looks covertly directed at them, and, somehow, they were always left to themselves.

Bert didn't seem to notice it; she supposed he was used to it, and, anyway, he was so full of happiness that he would hardly have minded.

It was all new experience to him. He had been to Geraldton before, of course, but always on business, looking after, droving, or trucking sheep or cattle, roughing it in camps or sleeping in the open.

The boarding house seemed to him palatial, and the picture shows, the boat trips, and the tea shops were an unending delight. They bought a great many things for their new little home—cups and saucers and utensils, curtains and mats and a table cover.

She bought some soft material and wool, too, to make clothes for her baby. She had some heart to think of her baby now, to plan for its coming. Bert bought it a rattle. He was just as interested in it as she was, so much so that she began to forget that it was not his.

The rest and freedom from worry and uncertainty worked wonders with her health and, after consulting a doctor and making arrangements at the hospital, she returned to Laralara looking happier and better than she had for many months.

It would be nonsense to say that she had fallen in love with Bert overnight. But he was so kind and gentle and considerate that to dislike him would be impossible, and his ingenuous delight in everything was so infectious. Besides, it was a new experience for her to have someone waiting on her hand and foot and admiring and adoring everything she said and did.

Steelman continued to emphasise that in the event of his getting a married overseer he would want the cottage and Bert would have to make other arrangements.

He need not have worried. Overseers, both married and single, came and went, not any of them staying a great while, but never once was the cottage required. Women of the present day are not so fond of trailing their men-folk into the back blocks if they can avoid it, and one and all preferred to pay rent and live in town, allowing their men to come for a brief weekly, or even monthly, taste of home and family life.

So Bert and Annie had undisputed occupancy of the cottage. Annie soon got to work with the scrubbing brush and polishing cloths, while Bert painted it and planted a garden. He watched and waited eagerly for a reply to his letter to Mr. Roberts, but days and weeks and months went by and none came.

He could only come to one conclusion. It was probably against the rules of the railways to employ a colored man and Mr. Roberts, in his kindness, did not like to tell him so.

Could he have known the truth, there was no such rule, but Mr. Roberts was away in the eastern States, seeking the health that was always eluding him, and the letter had never reached him . . . Poor Bert was somewhat depressed over this, and decided that he had better make the best of it and stay on at Laralara.

He was in reality the overseer. It was only Mr. Steelman's hidebound stupidity that refused to acknowledge the fact. Even when he did have a reasonably good overseer, he found himself going to Bert for confirmation of his statement, for his opinion, and advice.

In that clash of opinions it was always Bert's that he acted upon. But not for worlds would he have acknowledged the fact than an aboriginal practically ran his station.

**A**NNIE'S baby was born in early October. It was a beautiful, lily-fair girl, the image of Welles. It was the pride of the hospital, and the nurses took great delight in showing it off to visitors. Imagine their surprise and horror when, at the end of a fortnight, the half-caste father came to take his family home.

Annie noticed at once the difference in their demeanor, and it filled her with indignation and roused all her maternal instincts on his behalf. The impudence of them, she raged silently. Bert had been a wonderful husband, and she knew that he was imposed on at Laralara, and underestimated everywhere because of his dark skin.

"My husband," she told the nurses airily, "is overseer on Laralara station. He has been there for years, and Mr. Steelman relies on him for everything."

"Annie's Baby," created no small interest at Laralara. Mrs. Steelman, who had two boys and would have dearly loved a daughter, was filled with envy, and made no little fuss of the lovely child, while Mrs. Best hung over it like a doting grandmother. And when Annie brought it into town to consult the clinic nurse—who made periodic visits to Wogina—it was the admiration of all the mothers.

"Have you seen Annie Bennett's baby?" became the stock question for a while; then its beauty and points would be enlarged upon, comparisons made with other outstanding babies, always ending with the words: "Doesn't she keep it beautifully; everything about it is spotless."

Annie soaked it all in with delight until one day, leaving the baby in its pram outside the clinic for a moment, while she ran back for something, she returned to find a group of women bending over it. In the midst of them was Molly Smith, saying in her high pitched voice: "Come and have a look at Wellesey's baby, girls." By gosh, isn't she the image of him!"

"Pardon me," said an icy voice behind her, and Molly turned to confront the angry stare of Mrs. Annie Bennett. For once in her life Molly was speechless, dumb, and with a dignified "Excuse me please," Annie broke the ranks, took her pram and walked briskly away. It was a long time before she went into town again after that, and she was not half so keen again about showing off her baby.

Bert was as delighted with the child as if she had been his own, and was for ever making her some new toy

or devising something for her entertainment. Annie had her christened when the minister came into town, and called her Isobel, after her favorite sister.

She still worked in the "house" every morning, and that meant that the baby came with her. In its early days it lay quietly in its pram on the verandah, watching the leaves of the pepper tree flitting in the breeze, but later it would sit or climb around its playpen, blissfully amusing itself while Annie did the housework.

To the two little boys, Baden and Carlyle Steelman, aged three and two respectively, she was a never failing source of wonder and delight. They would sit or stand outside her pen and hang back to her the toys that she threw out as fast as she got them, gurgling with merriment, and later when she was able to toddle about, they were just as good to mind and guard her as much older children.

By the time she was eighteen months Annie was visiting the hospital for the second time, much to Mr. Steelman's disgust. The white baby could be forgiven, even admired, but the next would be dusky.

This time it was a boy. She had him christened before she brought him home, Anthony. He weighed eight pounds and was definitely dusky, but very dimpled and sweet, and Bert was in a seventh heaven of delight. With two babies Annie had her hands full, but she was an exceedingly good manager, and with the aid of Mac's eldest daughter—a girl of fourteen, still maintained her work in the homestead.

In return Mrs. Steelman was very good to her babies, often running up a pretty frock or bonnet for the beautiful Isobel, and making small garments too, for the little dusky, Tony, whose "cuteness" was mostarming.

Annie felt certain that the only reason why colored or half-caste children were taboo was because their mothers were not quite up to white standards of cleanliness. Hygiene with her was civilisation. Her children would be spotlessly clean, and they would be respected for it.

Within the next three years she had three more children; twin girls, who were the image of Bert, only whiter, and Paul, the youngest, was a dusky edition of herself.

These were happy, halcyon days for both Bert and Annie. The babies were one and all, a sheer delight, and all their lives revolved around them. Annie was quite optimistic about their future—even the dusky.

Sue was the last word in good mothering, and left no stone unturned to make her children perfect. She felt certain that her work would bear fruit, and that their superior upbringing would make up for the little matter of a slightly dark skin.

And not alone did she groom their bodies but their minds and their morals were carefully trained, and for good manners they could soon give points to the Steelman boys. Schooling for the two Steelman boys now became a problem. Their parents deemed them too young to send away, and yet the 44 miles each day, in and out of Wogina, their nearest centre, seemed to their father altogether too irksome and extravagant on both time and tyres.

Besides, they had only the State school there, and a small-town one at that; it was not part of his plan to have his boys mix with the riffraff of this raw town, absorbing the accent and manners of its crude inhabitants. So they took advantage of the State's excellent correspondence course, which

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Mrs. Steelman reluctantly agreed to supervise.

But she soon tired of it. A meticulous housekeeper, anything touching the academic she had always acutely disliked. Necessary, she knew, but not for her. She chafed under the time lost to her precious housekeeping, and she had a strong idea that she was not making a very good fit of it.

A succession of young women governesses followed but found the isolation more than they could bear, and at last Annie, who had been steadily supervising Isobel's lessons, and liked it, volunteered to take the two boys with her family, since Tony, now six, was eligible for lessons as well.

Mrs. Steelman breathed a sigh of relief, marvelling at Annie's patience. But Annie was pleased to have the white boys with her children. To keep the smaller ones quiet she provided them with colored crayons and plenty of white paper, and set them drawing.

This delighted the three; but Tony showed no signs of either artistic or scholarly leanings. He was essentially an out-of-doors boy, and spent most of his free time playing with their old sheep dog, Smoky, or riding round on Isobel's pony, Scamp.

It was Isobel's very own pony, bought with all the coins—mostly silver—that had been dropped in the money-box, supplemented by a generous amount from Mrs. Best, who idolised the child.

Tony rode bareback, and sometimes he and Paul would double-hank and take their father's lunch, if he were working not too far from the house. Paul, however, was a different child altogether, thoughtful and quiet, never so happy as when he was either drawing or looking at picture-books.

Their father was, to them, a very great man. They were fond of boasting of the wonderful things he could do. Nobody in all the west could ride like him; he could ride the wildest horse, could dismount while the horse was galloping; could cut out a steer from a herd.

And hunt! Kangaroos and emus and wallabies fell to him like flies to a swatter. Strangely, the Steelman boys were just as proud of him as they were, and did just as much boasting.

It seemed to Annie that life was turning out much better than she had imagined. It would, and the family's life at Larajara probably would have continued pleasantly if it hadn't been for Cynthia Faye's passion for interfering.

One night as the Steelmans were sitting on the verandah after dinner she said to her brother, "How much longer are you going to keep those darkies about here, John? I thought you didn't like the colored races."

Steelman looked surprised at the unexpected remark. "I don't particularly," he said. "But Bert is the only colored man I've got, and he's half white."

"May be, but colored none the less," persisted his sister. "And now he's raised a family—four no less—Tony and Paul will work here, I suppose, automatically, and the two girls too, to say nothing of any more there might be. In time this place will be a regular blacks' camp."

"What nonsense, Cynthia," he said testily. "Bert's and Annie's home is far from being a blacks' camp. I doubt if there's a cleaner or better kept house in the country, and the youngsters are splendidly brought up."

"Just the same," she said. "It's not quite wise, is it, to have Baden and Carl always hobnobbing with them?"

"I think they could easily find worse playmates," said Mrs. Steelman, who had been listening to the argument

and silently resenting her sister-in-law's interference. "And since Annie's taken over their schooling their reports are up fifty per cent. I don't know what we'd do without her—unless you'd like to take it on." with a touch of sarcasm.

"Me? No thank you." Cynthia stared at her arrogantly, then turned to Steelman. "But don't you think John, it would be better to send the boys to school, and let them get used to mixing with whites? Don't you think it will be bad for them later on if they are always mixing with blacks?"

Besides, they'll have quite a different attitude towards them. How would you feel if Baden and Carl made pals of these black boys when they're men, or wanted to marry Joan or Cathy?"

"Well, it's quite possible, if you let them form these attachments now."

"Good heavens Cyn, you do barge ahead," said John Steelman. "I don't for a moment think they'll find either of those little girls attractive, and when they've been at school a few years they'll soon grow away from Tony and Paul."

"Yes, but these are their formative years, and I think that Baden, for one, won't forget."

"Yes, you're right about that," he admitted, rubbing his chin. "But Carl's a bit young to go away yet, and I wanted to keep them together."

Lying awake that night, and listening to a mosquito buzzing in his room, John Steelman gave grave thought to Cynthia's suggestions.

Yes, he really should have got rid of Baden long ago when first his dusky little family began to arrive. But Bert was such a tip-top man and Annie was so useful too, that it had been easy to drift along and do nothing. Just what was he going to do? It would not be enough to simply send his boys away to school. These colored children would still be here when they returned on holidays. He wanted them off the place. But he didn't like to give Bert notice in cold blood after all these years.

Next morning there was a complaint from Jones the overseer. Young Tony had ridden up to the River Breakaway yesterday and left the gate between it and the seventy acres open, with the result the sheep were boxed, and would now have to be brought in and re-drafted.

"Tell Bert I'd like to see him in the office," said Steelman.

**H**ERE was, perhaps, an opportunity to get in the thin end of the wedge, Steelman thought. Anyway, he could let Bert see that his family were not exactly welcome on Larajara.

After stating his complaint he said: "Your youngsters are big enough to go to school now, Bert. Wouldn't it be a good idea if you went into town to live and came in and out like McCubbin?"

Bert scratched his head, completely nonplussed. He could hardly believe that Mr. Steelman wanted his family off the place. Once a week did not suit Bert to see his wife and family, so if the Boss wanted them elsewhere, then he would go too. He'd think out some plan.

He went straight down to the cottage and sought out Tony who was busy feeding and watering the chickens and ducks, his especial charge.

"Were you up at the River Breakaway yesterday, Tony?" he asked gravely.

"Tony nodded his curly pate. "Yes, Dad," he said.

"Then why didn't you shut the gate after you?"

The boy looked at him indignantly.

"I did shut the gate," he replied. An unsual gate was a major sin to the youngster.

"You sure?"

"You Strike me breff," solemnly.

"Then you come with me and tell Mr. Steelman."

It was 9 o'clock, and Mr. Steelman, his wife and stepson were just about to step into the town-bound motor-car.

"Just a moment please, Boss," said Bert, a new assertiveness about him.

"Now, Tony," he turned to the small boy, "tell Mr. Steelman."

"I didn't leave the gate open, Mr. Steelman," said Tony sturdily, looking him in the face.

"You were up in the River Breakaway yesterday?"

"Yes, but I shutted the gate."

"What were you doing up there?"

"I was looking for pretty stones in the ribbon bed."

"And you went on into the seventy acres?"

"No, I neber went up dera. I got me stones an' comed right back."

"Did you see anybody else up there?"

"No, I neber saw nobody," he assured them.

There was a moment's pause, then Steelman said: "Him. Well, the gate didn't open itself," and started to get into the car. "You'd better put a stop to his rambling, Bert. Come on, Lydia, we're late enough as it is."

That night when McCubbin heard about it he said: "Too right the kid never left it open. I know who did."

"Who?" Jones asked incredulously.

"I saw Mr. Wainly from White Gums

over here yesterday afternoon. He passed me in the River Breakaway when I was coming home. He was making for the seventy acres. I just happen to know he meets Cynthia by the old gum quite often. And her engaged, too, to that nice chap in Perth."

Bert wondered a good deal over Steelman's words. It was plain enough that the Boss wanted to be rid of his family, if not of him. But why?

He had often thought of a town job. It would bring him more wages, but he had many perks here that he would not have elsewhere, and on reflection he had decided that he did not wish to bring up his family in the town.

Experience had taught him that the colored man was better in the bush. It was his natural habitat, and nowhere was the inequality of his social status so marked as in the town, where the white man showed all too plainly how low was his estimate of the black as a fellow citizen.

For himself it did not greatly matter, but to have Annie or his youngsters humiliated would hurt him intensely. Besides, when no reply had come from Mr. Roberts he had felt rebuffed, and hardly knew how or where to try again, so, since no one had challenged their right to the cottage, and Annie was proving so useful to the Steelman family in the matter of education, he had hoped the cottage could be theirs permanently.

And then something happened to push Mr. Steelman's wedge in a good deal further.

Mrs. Best, how well over sixty and suffering from acute rheumatism, had at last been persuaded to retire from active service and share a home with a widowed sister in the city.

Annie fully expected that the job would be offered to her, and was in something of a quandary as to whether she would accept it. It was good money, but there was the children's schooling, she could not neglect that.

It was rather a relief to her, therefore, when Mrs. Steelman announced that she was getting a couple up from Perth. Arnold had been promoted to

boundary rider, so they needed a yard-man too." Not likely that Mrs. Steelman would be doing herself out of her teacher, thought Annie smugly. But how little she knew.

As a matter of fact, Mrs. Steelman had broached the matter to her husband of asking Annie to do the cooking, pointing out that as Isabel and the twins grew up they could be incorporated into their service, and they would thus be assured of help in the house for many years.

But Mr. Steelman had other plans. "I'm getting rid of Bert and his little tribe," he said, "as soon as I can get it into his thick head that I don't want him. I've given him one good hint already, and I'll soon follow it up with another."

"If you put Annie in the kitchen it will only settle them in more firmly than ever . . . No, I think it would be a good idea to get new blood into the place all round. As for the boys, we'll have to send Baden to school anyway. Perhaps you could manage Carlyle on his own for a year?"

So old Ma Best departed, with many tears on the part of Annie and the children, for they loved her as dearly as if she had been their own Bush and blood. Annie obliged with the cooking for a few days until the new cook should arrive, and made everything as comfortable as possible for the newcomers, fixing up Ma's room for Mr. and Mrs. Burns, and her own old one for the two Burns children, as only Auntie could.

She could not help wondering what the new cook would be like. She hoped that she would be a nice companionable woman, and that the children would get along together.

Mrs. Burns proved to be a smart hard, materialistic woman of about thirty-five. Annie disliked her at first sight. She was the type of woman of whom Auntie was both shy and afraid, with her scurious tongue and her complete absence of reserve. Instinctively she buckled under her armor of prim exclusiveness to Mrs. Burns' annoyances.

Annie immediately raised the color bar and objected to her two spoiled and ill-mannered children mixing with "niggers." Said have none of these niggers in her kitchen, she said, and when gentle little Cathy went in there one day after her kitten, the loud-voiced creature sent her home in tears.

"She called me a little n-n-nigger and said I s-stealed," sobbed Cathy.

"Well, don't go there any more, not even for your kitty. She's a nasty woman. Keep away from her," counseled her mother.

But the children had run in and out to Mrs. Best just as freely as into their own place, and it was hard to break them of the habit. The big, bright, comfortable kitchen with its great cooking range, the dresser along one side of the wall stacked with shining plates and dishes; the huge refrigerator that held such lovely things in summertime, were all as a magnet to them.

How often the twins had sat in the old sofa under the big double window, playing with their kittens or dolls and watching Mrs. Best at her various duties. She always liked to have them there and would send them on little errands to the pantry for an onion or two, a few potatoes, anything she might need.

Tony and Paul, too, had been in and out of it a good deal, filling up the chip box, gathering the eggs, bringing her mushrooms in season, quandongs for pies, and emu eggs for cakes.

The kind old woman had never neglected to reward these attentions, and

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now, to ask them to keep away from this loved, familiar place, quite suddenly, was asking a very great deal. Their little feet strayed there almost against their wills.

Mrs. Burns' ideas on the color question were without equivocation. All blacks, whether full, half, or quarter-caste, were niggers — dirty, lazy, and dishonest. She considered that Annie must necessarily be low and was scandalized at Mrs. Steelman keeping her on the place.

Mrs. Steelman soon sized up the newcomer, knowing full well that she could not hold a candle to either Annie or Ma Best as a woman. But she was a quick and efficient cook, and her husband was a good enough yardman, and peace in industry was something to be prized.

In the main a just woman, but passionate, Mrs. Steelman was above and before all, practical, and would allow no considerations of sentiment to interfere with the running of the place, so when Mrs. Burns came to her with complaints about the children, the writing was on the wall.

"I'm sorry, Bert," said Steelman, taking up a paper-knife and playing with it rather nervously. "But you'll have to do as I suggested before and take your family to live in town. Mrs. Burns complains about the children, and besides she's asked me for the cottage. The kitchen quarters are rather cramped for a family. You know I always told you we might want it some day."

He put down the paper-knife satisfied that he had pushed the wedge home at last. Yes, he owed a great debt to Mrs. Burns in that respect.

"Very well," said Bert. "If that's so I'll give you my notice now. If the family goes, I go."

"All right. But I think you're very foolish. If Mac can work from the town, I don't see why you can't and jobs aren't too plentiful just now."

After all the fellow had been a good servant. Annie too, Mr. Steelman was not terribly comfortable about what he was doing, and the way he was shouldering the white man's burden. But he thought of the boys, and hardened his heart.

**B**ERT went in with McCubbin that week-end to reconnote.

"Why don't you have a talk to old Cliff Wilson," suggested Mac on the way in. "He knows any jobs there might be, and he's a mighty good sort."

Wilson was the grocer-keeper and ran a stock agency as well. He was an elderly man with a shrewd mind, but a kind heart. He knew everybody throughout the district, and how they stood, morally as well as financially.

Above all, he made some attempt at steering the blacks aside of things, and it was to him they came in their perplexities.

When Bert told him he was leaving Larrahra, Wilson said: "Way, Bert, the place won't go on without you. But it's time you wake up. You could do a lot better in here."

"I wondered," said Bert hesitantly. "If they'd take me on the railway."

"Railway nothing," said Wilson bluntly. "You'll make far more driving and be your own boss into the bargain. You needn't be afraid, you won't get enough work to keep you going. There's plenty hobs knocking about now, looking for work, but good stockmen are as scarce as money."

"Now, got any idea where you're going to live?"

Bert had. McCubbin had told him

that the Prentices were leaving town, Prentice having been moved to another railway town, and a single man was taking his place, so his house would be vacant. Fifteen bob a week. Mac said that Prentice paid. Bert was in hopes that he might get that place.

"Yes, that place would suit you very well," agreed Wilson. "Got a good yard and a stable where you could keep a horse and a cow and a good big garden. I'll see old Greenwood and fix it up for you if you like."

That suited Bert, who was timid about approaching white people, except those he knew well, and he rode home that night in great spirits.

Annie, too, was relieved, for she had carried a dread in her heart that she might be expected to live in the native quarter of the town. She had been serving herself for a fight for life in that quarter she was firmly resolved not to do, even if it meant building them a house with her own hands.

Early next morning she wrote her mail order to the furniture firm in Geraldton. Much of the furnishings of the cottage was their own, but they would want beds, chairs, sofa, table, a safe and a kitchetcote. Floors for the floor and other luxuries could come later, but these they must have at once.

Mrs. Steelman was taking the children, with her own two boys and the Burns children, for a picnic in the car. It was a farewell picnic, and both Baden and Carl were loud in their sorrow at parting with their old playmates, especially as they disliked the Burns children.

But the Bennetts were all wildly excited. They were going to the town to live, and the town was to them a charmed place, associated in their simple minds with shows and circuses and ice creams, Sunday clothes and general gaiety. And Larrahra was not the same place since the Burns had come.

As she drove along with Bert in the sulky that he had bought soon after their marriage Annie was feeling a good deal of satisfaction that things were turning out so well. Bert was assured of constant work, and they would be able to live among the white folk, in the heart of the town.

But a sad disappointment awaited them. Mr. Greenwood refused to let them his house.

He had been quite willing to let it to Mr. Wilson's client until he discovered that he was a half-caste, and then he shut down on him like a clam. No colored people could have any house of his, he declared.

"I don't care if they're the cleanest, quietest, decentest people in the world," he said. "They're niggers and once my home is occupied by niggers it loses caste and white people won't want it again. Why can't they go and set one of the humphies down among their own people?"

For the half-caste population — about a hundred or so — all clung together in a vacant paddock at the back of the town. It was known as Kangaroo Flat, and consisted of a number of humphies and ramshackle cottages, long condemned; some wooden, some brickish, and some stone, but all of them low grade, and unfit for human habitation. The whites tabooed this quarter as though it had been a plague centre.

"You couldn't ask Mr. Bennett to go there, Greenwood," expostulated Wilson indignantly. "She's a white woman, and a decent one, and Bert . . ."

"If she's a decent woman," interjected Greenwood, "how come she married a black? She's got to become one of her husband's people now. No, Wilson, in fact I'm surprised at you asking such a thing. Nothing would

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ever induce me to let my house to natives, and that's all about it."

The two men had been talking in Wilson's office, and at times they had, unconsciously, raised their voices. It was unfortunate that Bert and Annie had just come in to see Mr. Wilson, and were waiting in the shop till he should be disengaged. Consequently they overheard the whole of this unhappy conversation.

To Bert, the disappointment was very great. The insult was something that he had been accustomed to all his life. One more or less made little difference to him. But he knew that it would hurt Annie, and for her sake he suggested that they should go for a walk down the street and come back later.

Annie, deeply humiliated, was only too ready to comply. Fortunately it was early, and customers few at that time, but even to have the star overbearing was enough. She stumbled out after him, tears misting her eyes.

Around in the hardware corner of the shop, screened from the view of other customers, his head buried in a machinery catalogue, was big Wally Condon. He also waited to see Wilson, for he wanted to order parts for his machine.

Wally was a prosperous farmer. His bulk, and his somewhat sycophantic expression, misled people who did not know him into believing him a simple, good-natured sort. But Wilson, his banker, and a few others knew that his looks belied him, and behind his placid face and sleepy eyes was a brain that worked.

The very antithesis of a hustler, yet he had accomplished a great deal. They called him the Sandplain King, because he had taken up a large tract of what had seemed worthless land, experimented, and produced such astonishing results that others had been attracted to follow his lead.

There was a good deal of this sandplain country immediately around Wagin. The good can't be farther out, and this productivity of the land that had so long been idle was bringing a new prosperity to the little town. Especially as Wagin had long suffered through being the centre of large holdings—sheep and cattle runs that employed comparatively few men.

So Wally Condon, as the author of this new prosperity was not unpopular, especially with the business people to whom it meant so much. But he was popular with others too, for as well as a brain, he camouflaged a heart behind his sycophantic indifference.

He had seen Bert and Annie waiting in the shop, and, of course, overheard the heated argument in the office, and Annie's stumbling steps as she went out the doorway did not escape him.

He knew Bert. Prior to taking up the sandplain country he had been a farm contractor, and had done considerable work on Larakara; clearing, dam-sinking, earth-moving. He had thus had ample opportunity to gauge the worthlessness of the half-caste. And apart from his work, he had talked to him in the evening and considered that Bert had a better brain than plenty of whites, while morally he was far above the average.

As soon as Greenwood departed, he filled the office doorway with his big frame, pushed his old felt hat back on his head, and said with a sheepish grin:

"What's the trouble, Cliff? Lookin' for a house for someone?"

"Yes. For Bert Bennett. I told you he was comin' into town. It'll be a treat to get stockman we can trust . . . Greenwood's holding out on him because of his color. Color me foot-

I'd rather have the Bennetts in my house than lots of whites."

Wally leaned against the door post and said lazily, his hands thrust deep into his trousers pockets:

"Is that the only house he can get?"

"Yes. The only decent one, anyway. I'd be sorry to see them turned into Kangaroo Flat."

Wally made no reply. Seemingly the discussion was ended and he had gone to sleep on his feet. Wilson bussed himself with his books.

"What's the place worth?"

The suddenness of the question recalled Wilson with a start.

"What's that?" he said absently.

"What place?"

"Greeney's place. The one that's vacant."

"Oh . . . I suppose about two or three hundred. Why?"

"Just wonderin'." Fifteen bob a week.

"Thirty nine quid a year.

"Not bad interest."

"No . . . Thinking of buying it?"

"Think he'd sell?"

"Dunna. But you never know. He'll want more'n it's worth if he does."

"Property's not worth much just now."

"No. Money's scarce. Three hundred's a good price for it, but he'll want his pound of flesh."

**M**RS. GREENWOOD was very annoyed. The idea of asking him to let blacks into one of his houses? What next, he wondered. He got into his car and drove straight out to the vacant place to look it over, for he had not seen it since Prentice went out a few days ago—not seen it for a considerable time, in fact.

What he saw there did not appear, by any means, Prentice was a railway employee, and evidently had not put any of his spare time and energy into the upkeep of his house. It not only shrieked for paint both inside and out, but several of the verandah boards needed replacing, the guttering was sagging from the roof, railings were off the fence, and the garden was a mass of weeds.

The back of the house was even worse. Chimney tumbling down and the sheds aimlessly crying out for repairs.

"The old story," he grumbled. "Tenants won't take care of your property. It needs at least fifty pounds spent on it right now. For two pins I'd sell it—but who would buy it in its present state?"

He was in that frame of mind when he got back into the street and "accidentally" ran into Wally Condon. Wally, as usual, was so nearly asleep that he almost walked into him.

"Oh, hello, Mr. Greenwood," he drawled cheerfully. "Great day, isn't it? Been out looking at the country?"

"No," snapped Greenwood, for the sight of so much plodding irritated him.

"I've just been looking at one of my houses that's become vacant . . . Upon my word, a man's a fool to own house property. The men they breed nowadays are too lazy to get out of their own road, let alone drive a nail or keep a garden tidy."

"Left your place in a bad state, has he, Mr. Greenwood?" in sympathetic drawls. "Tch, tch!"

"Disgraceful!" Now that he had a sympathetic ear, Mr. Greenwood went to town properly, and painted a woeful—and exaggerated—picture of the desolation of the empty house, assessing the required renovations at a hundred pounds at least.

"Practically two-and-a-half years'

rent . . . For two pins I'd put the place on the market and get rid of it."

Wally scratched his head thoughtfully.

"I believe I could do with a place like that for my stockman," he drawled. "He won't be fussy. I suppose a couple hundred would buy it?"

Greenwood changed his tune at once, realising that he had rather overplayed his part. He hadn't dreamed of Wally being interested in the place. But he wouldn't find him hard to bargain with, he looked too stupid for words.

"It's worth four fifty," he conceded at last, "but I'd probably let it go for four."

Wally grinned sneakingly. "Aw, I only wanted a cheap little place," he drawled. "I thought about a couple hundred—I might even go to two fifty, but four hundred's a bit high."

He got the place for three hundred, and told Wilson that Bert could have it at 15/- a week, the first year free if he would paint and tidy it up.

Meanwhile, Bert and Annie had gone down to Mrs. Grant's teashop to drown their disappointment in a cup of tea, when Wilson rushed in to tell them the good news.

Bert was stunned, and so was Annie.

"But," he said in the precise mission English that never left him, "I need him myself say that he would not let us have the house. Are you sure quite sure that we can?"

"Yes, yes. Don't you see, Greenwood has no say in it now. Wally Condon's bought the house so that you can live in it. Now there's a Christian and a gentleman for you."

"I guess you won't forget it, Bert, when you're drawing some of his slack, and you'll get plenty of work from Wally . . . Yes, there's not too many men would do that. I told him he was pretty safe putting you folk in it, Mr. Bennett?" . . . I guess you'll soon get the paint brush to work. And no rent for twelve months. Well, well. It's not such a bad world after all, is it?"

It took Annie and Bert only a few weeks to transform the Prentice place. They soon had it painted, inside and out; windows, doors, gates, fences mended; verandah boards replaced and the garden at least tidied.

The new furniture arrived with the linoleums that they had, at the last moment, decided to order, and Annie made all the curtains herself, from pretty floral muslin bought at the local store.

The children were full of excitement at the change and all the activity, running here and there, helping Dad, helping Mum, and getting in everyone's way.

Tony in particular was quite wild with excitement and animal spirits, till Annie began to wonder whether the change was going to be good for him. Such spirits would surely get him into mischief here in town, where there were so many restrictions.

Bert only laughed at him, for he well understood how he felt. There was a good deal of the boy in Bert still, though his spirits had never had the chance of outlet that Tony's had.

It did not take Annie long to realise that her neighbours—one at least—did not share their enthusiasm. Mrs. Freyer looked askance at the dusky children playing in the next-door garden, and told Mrs. Sime, on her other side, that it was coming to something when they had niggers for next-door neighbours, and she meant to do something about it.

Her husband was a guard on the train, her family mostly mixed, and she was a leading woman in all the town's social movements.

## ROSE IN A DUSKY GARDEN

Supplement to The Australian Women's Weekly—August 23, 1954

The Red Cross, and the Parents and Citizens Association.

She had disliked the thirtiness Practices, but to have blacks come in their place was to her the last straw. She was not without a certain influence, and had the matter brought up at the next meeting of the local Road Board.

As a property owner and a citizen, she wrote, the blacks should be kept to their own quarter. Half-castes had lately taken possession of a house in the white quarter of the town. This would lower the status of all property there. Could not the Road Board take action to have them removed?

When the secretary read out this letter at the meeting, you could have heard a pin drop. The members, of course, knew all about the incident; the whole town had laughed at the way old Greenwood—none too popular—was hoist by his own petard, and they had applauded Wally Condon's "Christian action" in standing up for and giving a hand to a decent couple.

But this was another aspect. People who owned property in the town, after all, had a right to be considered, and how many of them would care to have "niggers" living right beside them, or even in their immediate locality? The natives had always kept to their own quarter and made no demands, and no such case had ever before arisen.

The trouble was, said Smith Treverton, with his studied Oxford accent, that it would establish a precedent, and after all the rights of the citizens must be protected. It was better for all concerned that the natives should be kept in their place.

He was followed by Graham and Wanless both talking in the same strain.

The blacks must be kept in their place. No use being maudlin about them. Black was black and white was white. They had their own quarter and should be compelled to stay in it. If there was no by-law to that effect, then it was time there was, and they should do something about it.

Then Clyde Harrison arose, as they confidently believed, to give voice to the same sentiments. The four Smith Treverton, Graham, Wanless, and Harrison were all of "old school tie" class, and usually stood together.

At least three of them had Harrison was a recent member and had not yet been tried out. He was a quiet, reticent fellow, but as he was representing a very rich property, and was therefore influential, they felt confident that he would be strongly with them.

But Clyde Harrison owned the station

that shuttled Laralara, and he had known Bert Bennett for years. As a schoolboy, before Steelman's time, he had been on friendly terms with the old owner of Laralara, and had paid him many a visit, so that he and Bert had had many a day in the bush together.

Later, when he had taken over the management of his station, he had had various traffickings with Laralara via Bert. Bert would always let him know if any of his sheep or cattle strayed their way, if any of his fences were down, waterholes dry etc. etc. In fact, he had a very great respect for Bert, as a tip-top neighbor, and he knew perfectly well that Smith Treverton was full of it.

He had grave reason to suspect that any stock that might stray into Treverton stayed there. He was, moreover, an indolent farmer, in debt up to the ears, only the old name and occasional help from a well-doing brother kept him going, while his fences and fire-breaks were never attended to. As a neighbor he was a continual headache.

Wanless, as everybody knew, spent three-quarters of his time in the "pub." His wife had belonged to one of the

first families. Handouts from her relations kept them going.

Graham's wife ran turkey and chickens and cows, and worked like a slave on their place, while he spent his time in getting himself on to committees and boards and delegations, running about the country and generally wasting his time.

They were, in Harrison's opinion, three-wasters, and to hear them sit in judgment on a decent, hard-working man like Bert set his blood afire.

"Dash it all," he said without any preliminary introduction, "we've all heard about the indigence of the natives, and how they're lazy and dirty, but what encouragement do we give them to be anything else?"

"I challenge anyone to live in the hovels of the native quarter and remain a decent citizen. And then when one of them shows himself to be hard-working, clean and decent, what do we do? Instead of encouraging him to be like us, we try to push him back."

"I'd rather have Bert Bennett and his wife living next door to me than lots of white people, and what's more, I think he'll be a very useful man in this town."

Wally Condon said nothing, but grinned at the surprise and discomfiture of the old-school-ties, for well he knew that the other four members would be against them as a matter of course.

Then Frank Shepherd, a wheat farmer in a big way though no scholar, stood up and said that he understood that Mrs. Bennett was a white woman of a very superior type, and a good stockman like Bert would be very useful, and he didn't know what all the fuss was about anyway. The secretary was asked to reply to Mrs. Freyer that so long as the Bennetts conducted themselves like decent citizens no one had the power to evict them from any quarter of the town whatever.

Next morning the whole affair was reported verbatim in the local paper, and Annie read with much satisfaction how Mr. Harrison had championed their cause, while Mr. Shepherd's remark that she was a "white woman of a very superior type" gave her a thrill of pride . . . . And Mr. Harrison had said "a decent scut like Bert." On the whole she felt that the battle was not going against them.

Wilson came on that evening to see how they were progressing. He patted Annie on the shoulder and told her she could ignore the old Freyer, or any other old cat like her.

**T**HE controversy and agitation over the Bennetts' coming to the town soon died down. Mrs. Freyer grew accustomed to seeing Bert ride in and out on horseback, or driving in his tilted cart. Smoky and Gyn barking and frisking at his heels. But he was always tidily dressed, and quiet in voice and manner.

The place, contrary to her predictions, had not become a dirty and noisy blacks' camp. No other blacks ever came there. Bert sometimes did employ help from the native quarter, but they always left him at the entrance to the town and turned into Kangaroo Flat.

The children kept their footholds and their animals on their own side of the fence. And the transformed appearance of the place, the snowy washing on the line, the neatness of the children's attire, left her dumb. She had no hope of getting them out, she knew, so she left them alone.

And that was just what everyone else did. Not only Mrs. Freyer, but the whole of Wagga ignored them as completely as if they had not been there.

Buhalus' people were polite, but impersonal.

Even Mr. Wilson, their champion, did not invite them to meet his family. They were a kind of social No Man's Land, not wanted by either side, a problem with which no one wished to become entangled.

It was very daunting, and so Annie felt very happy when Kate McCubbin, Mac's wife, paid her a visit armed with a setting of duck eggs and a huge bag of plants and cuttings for the garden.

Kate was a gaunt, weather-beaten woman, with little regard for looks or style, but Annie liked her, and over a cup of tea they were soon chatting like old friends.

She made it plain that, whatever the town thought, she was on Annie's side; not for nor interest in the native question, but because Annie had always been "terrible decent" to Mac. She returned the kindness now with a loyalty and sympathy that was warming to Annie's heart.

"These townies now," she said as she attacked a slice of "brownie." "Just a lot o' jump-ups, puttin' on airs. Look at them school kids' frinstance. There's a little bunch of 'em thinks they're royalty. An' who are they?"

She looked sternly at Annie as though she expected her to produce the answer. Annie waited tensely.

"There's Judy Finch," she went on, counting them off on her fingers, "th' postmaster's daughter. Mother used to be a maid at the hotel," explained Kate. "An' Margot Hale. Father's th' stationmaster. Huh. I remember when he was a little shrimp of a porter up th' line an' his mother went out washin' (Father drank—softly voice)

"Norma Collins—that's th' other store, y'know . . . broke halifive been there three times already . . . an' last but not least, Glenny Graham."

She took a big draught of tea, as though preparing for a special effort.

"You musta heard of th' Grahams of Montrose Park," she went on. "Poor as wood—but they belonged to th' first families."

"Mrs. Graham works like a slave to keep things goin' while the ole man runs round washin' his time . . . Well, Glenny Graham's th' leader o' that bunch . . . Glenny's always going away to boardin' school nex' year, but nex' year never comes."

This autocratic bunch, she claimed, ruled the roost at school, or had done. The others, including Tessie Robb, Suse Kehle, and her own Rose, were herded into a minority and treated like dirt. Two half-caste girls, Nellie Adams and Petal Purvis, the only colored girls in the senior school, had been accepted by the despised minority. And the "toffs" had cold-shouldered Isobel into this bunch of outcasts. "as if she isn't as white and as pretty as an angel."

But the little ex-queen of Laralara got back at them. She organised her minority and led them against their rivals in games in class, and was soon able to beat them hands down. And all the boys were behind Isobel, who was having the time of her life. The youngsters were all excited over it, and Rose had heard Mr. Arthur, the head teacher, tell someone that "Isobel was like a tonic to the school."

"Yes, Isobel will be all right," Annie said, "and Tony too. Mr. Arthur has been very kind to them. But the three little ones are most unhappy, and I really don't know what I shall do. Miss Grieve makes them sit among those dirty children from Kangaroo Flat. The white children call them niggers, and

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throw stones at them, while Miss Grieve bullies the life out of them."

"Why don't you send 'em to the Sisters?" Kate said.

"The Sisters?" Annie's thoughts turned to the small, white cottage not far away, bearing a cross above its gate, and the name "Dominican Convent."

The sisters taught in the church-school beside it, about a score or so of children, all white, and mostly of junior school age. Oh, to have them taught by the gentle sisters, but would they take half-castes?

"I bet they would," said Kate. "You could try anyway."

Yes, she could try, but her heart misgave her as she turned in at the small white gate. They weren't compelled, like the State school, to take them. Oh, if they only would!

Sister Josephine, the superior, was tall and handsome. She looked so chaste, so other-world, in her white habit, that Annie suddenly felt the utter outcast that she was. Then the sister smiled, right into Annie's heart, and the next moment she was telling her the whole story.

Of course they would take her children, the sister assured her; their color would make no difference. They were all the same before Our Lord. She introduced her to Sister Angela, a girl in her early twenties, and middle-aged Sister Therese, who did the housework. Annie went home a happy woman. Happy, not only about her children, but her confidence had been restored, and she had found new friends. Sister Josephine was the first woman in Wouna to be nice to her, and she worshipped her for the rest of her life.

So Cathy and Joan and Paul were delivered from Miss Grieve, and did well at their new school. They were found to have a great talent for music, so Annie started them right away with piano lessons, and began to save for a piano. In Paul they saw a budding artist, declaring that he had a way of drawing animals with truth and vivacity that was remarkable.

Isobel had no desire to change. There was too much excitement where she was. The Parents and Citizens' Association had just put in a new tennis court, and she was learning to play and fast developing into a champion. Wild horses would not have dragged her from it. Tony also flatly refused to leave "the fellas," with whom he was popular.

Tennis now became Isobel's chief object in life. She threw herself into her practice with such zest that she soon outclassed every other girl in the school. Glenys Graham was a good second, and the two practised hard for the match against Blueberry Creek. This naturally broke down much of the animosity between them, and each girl round herself viewing the other in a new light.

Glenys, a year older than Isobel, was a nice youngster, in spite of her snobbish upbringing. She rode in and out to school each day on a pony, and to Isobel's surprise, was able to give only a minimum of her after-school time to tennis practice. It transpired that she had many chores awaiting her each evening.

"I do it to help Mum," she confessed to the astonished Isobel, who had always imagined her life a bed of roses. "It's Mum who keeps the place going. Dad's a complete washout."

They were on the road, on their ponies, when this confession was made, for Isobel, intent on winning the girls' doubles, had made a bargain with her. If Glenys would stay behind for an hour's practice each afternoon, she would ride out with her and help her with her chores.

Mrs. Graham was quite nice about allowing her to help Glenys. She

treated her with an affectionately tolerant and patronising air that left her in no doubt as to who was the honored one.

They found her, on Isobel's first visit to the fowl-yard, wearing a pair of navy slacks thick with grease, and an old sleeveless shirt of her husband's, likewise his old, felt hat beneath her hair lying in dishevelled wisps, her face and arms black with grime.

But she still maintained her dignity with it all.

When they went into the kitchen for a much-needed cup of tea, it was in a fine state of disorder. The breakfast dishes were still unwashed on the table, the floor unswept.

**G**LЕНYS clucked in disgust. "No doubt it's funny," she said. "My father and mother pride themselves on being most highly civilised and refined, and yet we live just like the blacks—er-er-er I mean."

"It's all right, Glenys," Isobel said with a grin. "You don't have to apologise to me. I suppose most of the blacks do live like—like—"

"Like we do," put in Glenys quickly. "But there's some excuse for them. We know better. But you mustn't think it's always as bad as this. Today Mum's been catching and crating fowls to send away to market."

"But doesn't your father help her?" Glenys snorted.

"Haven't you heard of the Better Farmers' League?" she asked. "It's his latest chick, and he's honorary organiser. Oh yes quite honorary. None of Dad's chicks ever bring in anything. But he's very busy going all over the country, using our petrol and our tyres to further the interests of better farming Better Farming!"

"But to get back to the blacks; you know, it's just a matter of development. We were all at that stage once, only we've got past it, and they're somehow staying still. It's just a matter of their catching up."

"Fa-ee, I suppose so. But I really don't know much about blacks, Glenys, though I'm mixed up with them. I don't know as much about them as you do. And we certainly don't live like them. My mother's a super-duper housekeeper, and Dad's a super-duper breadwinner. We have no worries—except I think Mum worries over it on our account, the mixed blood I mean."

There was silence awhile, then Glenys said as she poured a cup of tea.

"I've been rather mean to you, haven't I, Isobel. But it's got nothing to do with color. I know perfectly that you're as white as I am, and your sisters and brother are nice, clean kids. No. It wasn't that. It was your look. It was the way you came into the class as though you owned it, and swept all the boys off their feet. You, like a bird of paradise, and me like an old sick crow. I couldn't stand it."

"Oh, Glenys, you're not. I always think you're so queenly. You've got breeding written all over you."

"Well, Isobel, if looks mean anything, then you must have some good ancestors somewhere. I'm sure your father must have had good blood in his veins."

Isobel shrugged. "My father," she said. "I'm afraid he's a mystery. Mum doesn't say much about him, only that he's dead, and that Dad adopted me. But I feel she doesn't want to talk about him, so I never ask. No. It's funny when you think of it. I don't even know my right name."

"Well, why worry. You've got the looks, that's the main thing. What's

the good of me having a background? It never gets me away to boarding school, or gives me a good time. I'd swap it for your looks any day."

Isobel said nothing to that, but she had her doubts. She had had enough experience in her short life to let her know that there was much more in background than Glenys pretended. And she was to experience this much more intensely when she met the world full on.

After this exchange of confidences Glenys Graham and Isobel became good pals. But Isobel had too much sense to invite Glenys to her home—an instinctive feeling that Mrs. Graham would say no, and she was too proud to risk a snub. But they were friends at school, and Glenys confided to her many of her own troubles and dissatisfactions.

The other girls fell into line then, but rather grudgingly. If Glenys had been less confident a leader, they would have flung her aside along with Isobel, and scorned them both, but she had them well in hand so they made a grace of necessity, and treated Isobel with toleration, if not with cordiality. And Isobel paid them back in their own coin—toleration only. Glenys was the only friend she ever made in school.

But when they defeated Blueberry Creek crushingly at tennis, Isobel winning all before her, and followed this with victories over all the surrounding schools, even their animosity could not prevent Isobel from becoming something of a heroine.

It was a sunny morning in early spring. The children were at school. Bert had departed at daybreak to collect a flock of sheep from the railway yards and take them out to Yardeck Station, some ten miles out of town, and Annie was busy making a cake.

It was a very special cake, for Sister Josephine's birthday, and she was planning to ice it very elaborately, humming a tune as she beat up the eggs. She was feeling very happy this morning, for things seemed to be shaping well, and many of her anxieties had disappeared.

Not that she was making any more progress with the people of the town, but she had lately grown indifferent to them. She had the sisters; her younger children were happily placed, and Isobel was doing marvellously at tennis.

Besides this she was getting a great deal of comfort and pleasure out of her new home. It was so much larger, so much better than the little make-shift cottage at Laradale. She had been able to add pieces of furniture, too, from time to time, since Bert was earning so much more.

She proudly regarded her spic-and-span, cream-and-green kitchen, with the sun dancing in through the cream net curtains on to the flowering red geraniums along the sill, like a row of scarlet flags, setting alight every loved gadget and object till the room was one paean of joy.

Annie's heart overflowed, and she thought happily of all she was doing for her little home. The gay Afghan rugs she was making for the boys' beds, the daintier things she planned for the girls'. For Isobel's thirteenth birthday she planned to turn her bedroom into a boudoir fit for a princess, with blue and white and pink flowered chintz, a pale blue rug on the floor.

The twins would get the same in their turn. It was the least she could do for the poor lambs, she thought with a sigh... At least they would have the solace

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of a pleasant home, whatever life did to them they would have that to look back upon.

Easter Sunday came—the fourth since they had left Laralara—and all the house was in a dither, with everyone getting ready to go to church.

The twins and Paul had started it for the religious atmosphere in which they moved had so influenced them that they had infected the whole family.

All the week they had chanted and warbled the Easter hymns, the canon was practising, they had taken armfuls of bowers for the decoration of the altar, and now they induced their father to accompany them to the Easter Mass.

Paul cleaned his boots, while the girls brushed his clothes and almost pushed him into them in their hurry to be off.

Annie caught up by the fervid spirit decided to go to the service at the Methodist Church.

Isobel put on her best dress and took great care with her hair. But it seemed she was going to the Church of England and not to the Methodist with her mother.

"What's got into you?" Annie cried in surprise, "going down there by yourself? You were christened Methodist."

Isobel flushed and looked a little embarrassed.

Then Annie remembered that the Steelmans usually came to the Church of England on special occasions.

For the Steelmans were home again for the first time in four years. The "house" at Laralara was again open.

Mrs Steelman was much better and the boys had brought quite half a dozen of their schoolmates with them for the holidays.

Rose McCubbin had told Isobel all about it at school. Sarah, her elder sister, who had helped Annie out more than once at the old place was going there to help Mrs Burns for the occasion.

This was exciting news for Isobel whose heart still clung around those old companions of her so-happy days. She would be seeing Baden again. It seemed as if he had been waiting all these years for this. Disappointed though she had been at his not writing now all would be right. He would be certain to call and see them.

Annie, too, felt sure that Mrs Steelman would at last pay her the long expected visit. She would naturally want to see their home and how the children had grown, especially Isobel, her favorite. So she put an extra polish on things and felt very pleased that the garden was looking so well.

Isobel arrived home after the service in a smart car driven by a lad of about fifteen. He was gaunt and plain but had an air of assurance. It turned out to be Len Shepherd, the big wheat-grower's son. He had been at school with Isobel until this last term when he had gone off to college at New Norcia.

He had not been to church; he had simply been driving round the town in his father's new car and meeting Isobel returning, had taken her off for a drive, buying her an ice-cream soda at the fruit shop on the way and dodging around so that the local policeman would not see him driving without a licence.

This was almost as great a thrill to the twins as the church service had been. But Isobel took it very calmly and Annie could not but notice that there was a flatness about her as though something had not come up to her expectations.

"Anybody you knew at church?" her mother asked as she served their Easter turkey.

"No," laconically. "Oh well, I suppose

or two, but nobody that mattered."

"It's a wonder Mr and Mrs Steelman weren't there."

"Was Baden or Carl there, Iso?" queried Catty inquisitively.

"No." Shortly.

"Gee! You're lucky getting a ride with Lenine Shepherd! Is he your boy?" asked Joan.

"Oh, him!" said iso contemptuously.

"I bet Judy or Mabel would like to be you," opined Tony with his mouth full of turkey. "He ain't as good lookin' as Baden or Carl but he's always got lots of dough."

Next morning young Shepherd drove round again to see if Isobel would accompany him to the races at Widgewa. Annie was not prepared to allow her daughter to motor round the country with a lad of fifteen, but she was spared the pain of refusal, for after a parley at the front door the boy went away again, without her. It was reported later that he took a bevy of her school rivals, but Isobel seemed to be quite unaffected by the news.

**F**OR the next three days both Annie and Isobel were on the lookout for the Steelmans. Annie seeing that every cushion and rug and picture was placed to a nicety, that the flowers in the vases were fresh, and likewise the scenes and rakes in her larder, and Isobel refusing to leave the house.

She declined an invitation to a picnic with the McCubbins, missed a ride out with Tony and Dad, and even stayed away from tennis practice. If she sent a message to the store she hurried back impatiently sure that Baden would have called in her absence, and anxious not to lose a minute of him.

And then came the dreadful blow to them both.

Four years ago when Mr Steelman got rid of the Bennetts from Laralara he determined to do the job properly. This resolution was stiffened by the sight of a letter in the posting bag addressed to Baden's schoolboy sweetheart, Miss Isobel Bennett, Wagga.

He could see now that Cynthia had been right. It had been a mistake to allow the youngsters to mix with the Bennetts, and everybody knew that Baden and Annie's pretty daughter had been inseparable companions.

Well, now was the time to cut the ties between his home and the little half-caste family once and forever.

So he had called Baden to his office and had a heart to heart talk—at least he did all the talking and pointed out that he would rather his boys did not keep up any communication whatever with the Bennetts.

They were good enough people, he said, but not in their class and it was much better for people to stick to their own class, be it high or low. But what made them most undesirable, in fact impossible was their color. They were not white, but tainted with aboriginal blood.

Baden, he explained, belonged to an English family of very good blood, and English gentlemen never mixed as equals with colored people.

Baden here interposed gently. "But Daddy, Isobel is not black."

"No," admitted his father, rather grudgingly, "but her father was a bad lot, just as low as any black could be. And besides she is related to these half-castes so it's practically the same thing as if she were one of them."

"As a matter of fact," he went on, "I was foolish to let them stay on here so long, but Bert had been here since he was a boy and I didn't like to turn him away; one of those cases in

which you allow sentiment to interfere

with your principles. However, you'll soon be away to school now, and once there, believe me, you'll find something much more to occupy your mind than the little darkness of Wagga.

"You're to pull these Bennett children right out of your head. Of course if you should meet them in the street I don't think you need pass them without speaking, but you must not go to their house, and above all, you must not write to any of them. That's an order, and if I find you disobeying I will be very angry."

Baden was so surprised at this sudden change in his father's attitude to the people they had all liked so much, and for so long, that he thought about a very great deal.

His mother noticed how quiet he suddenly became and thinking it was the prospect of going away from home that saddened him tried to rally him by telling him it would really not be big at school.

"Oh yes, I do miss it. After all it's not so good here now since the Burns have come," he said.

"And the Bennetts have gone eh?" he added with a laugh.

"Mother, he said confidently. "Dad says I mustn't write to Isobel, and that we must never go to their house or be friends with them any more. Why? What have they done?"

He looked at him thoughtfully while he considered his words. "It's nothing we've done," Baden, she said, "but we're half-castes and your father doesn't like the blacks. He's right, you know. You can't have half-castes for friends. It's simply not done."

"Don't look so shocked. You'll find out as you grow older that I'm right. You've got to live by the rules laid down by society, and white society says no truck with blacks. All the same it's hard on little Isobel. Who is a beauty and I could shake her mother for not letting her be adopted by a good white family. She has no chance whatever while she's tied up to those half-castes."

Baden obeyed his father. He had always done so and it never occurred to him to do otherwise. But to put them completely out of his mind was a task to which his sense of truth and justice told him that there was something wrong somewhere.

He had a very great respect for Annie who had been a conscientious and sympathetic teacher while Bert had been something of a hero and why it should be wrong for Isobel to live with them and not be sent away to strangers he could not understand.

Then school broke upon him like an engulfing wave, sweeping him quite away from all the things he had known, and taxing all his powers of concentration and endurance. It was all so new, rules and regulations, sports and pleasures, new studies and new friendships quite engrossed him, and Laralara and the Bennetts grew fainter and fainter on his horizon.

Soon after this his mother fell ill. She spent most of her time between Perth and Melbourne, consulting specialists in and out of hospitals, and the boys spent their holidays at Aunty Cyn's home in Perth, or travelling.

The Easter holidays this year were bedded with the most splendid weather; glorious summer with its teeth drawn; days hot enough for bathing or lounging in light summer clothes; evenings chill enough for a wood fire and the comfort of your woolly pull-over. The boys were extremely active for the first few days, riding, shooting, bathing, and exploring the station generally tired enough at night to get to bed early. But they soon exhausted the interests of the station and began to lounge about the place and generally look a little bored. Tennis

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was the only thing that seemed to interest them, and at night Aunt Cynthia was at her wits end to know how to amuse them.

One of them had put a record on the gramophone which seemed pretty popular with them. It was jazz, and in a trice four of them had started to caper round in a burlesque of the dance getting quite a lot of enjoyment out of it.

Ah, girl, she decided. That was what they wanted.

"Why ever didn't some of you boys bring your sisters along with you?" she asked them when the music stopped, and they all subsided laughing and breathless on the lounge. Baden don't you know any nice girls you could have brought along?"

At that there was a great whoop of laughter.

"What? Baden, they cried in derision. "Don't you know, Mrs Muir, that he's a woman hater?"

The four people at the bridge table looked at Baden in surprise. This was an aspect of him that they had not known. He flushed and threw a cushion at the tormentors.

"What rot he said. "Don't take any notice of them."

"It's true," they reiterated. "Doesn't look at one of them though they chase him like crazy."

His mother had her own ideas. No other girl that he sees comes up to Isobel, she thought. His father's harsh veto of their friendship has only made him idealise her.

"You've trumped my trick, Cynthia," rapped out her husband who was rather intent on his game and could not understand why they wasted such a lot of time on a pack of youngsters.

"Oh, dear I'm sorry David," she said contritely, "but I'm worried. I've simply got to do something to keep these boys occupied for the next few days. Alec," turning to Mr Wantly from the neighbouring station, "tell me we're there any nice girls in Wogina?"

"I should hope so," he answered with a laugh. "Young Glenys for instance and Patsy Jones and Ann Blake."

"Now I've got a brain-wave. Cynthia went on. "Baden's birthday is next Thursday—suppose we give a party, let me see, a tennis party, and the girls could stay on for dinner and a dance in the evening. Could we gather up eight girls for our eight young men?"

"Oh, I guess so. Why not leave it to Glenys to gather them up?" Young Glenys has been playing some pretty good tennis lately; I hear she's captain or something of her team."

And so it was arranged. Two cars were despatched to Wogina on the Thursday to collect up the eight girls, for the tennis party. The list of names that Glenys had given to her mother had included Isobel, but Mrs. Graham had promptly crossed it off and substituted Gillian Dain, the doctor's daughter, a plump, fat, pimply girl who waddled.

"Moth-er!" expostulated Glenys. "Our tennis star! She's captain, you know."

"Yes, dear," said her mother, "but whatever would Mrs. Steelman think if we brought the half-caste's daughter? And I certainly object to my daughter going into society with a half-caste, however good she may be at tennis. You'll be going to school next year, yes, really this time, and you won't need to see anything of her after that. She's all right in her place, of course, but her place is not with us."

So the first thing Isobel knew about it was the account in the Saturday's paper. "A tennis party to celebrate the sixteenth birthday of Master Baden Steelman." It said. The names of the guests were given: Misses Glenys Gra-

ham, Judy Finch, Margot Hale, Norma Collins, Wendy Watson, Betsy Jones, Ann Blake, and Gillian Dain.

Everyone in the tennis club except herself! Baden's birthday, and she waiting at home thinking he would be sure to come on that day.

She did not ask herself why they had done it to her for she knew—

knew it better than ever now. She was a half-caste. White as the snow she might be but her waters colored blood affected her, too. And she like a fool had begun to think that they didn't mind it any more.

When she won them a match at tennis, they clapped and cheered and called her the tennis star and she had taken it all in and believed they meant it.

Did Baden think of her that way?

Had he asked that she be not invited? Not for a moment did she think so either it was Mrs. Cynthia Muir or she had been treacherous among her tennis friends. It didn't matter which, they all tell the same she knew. But Baden no she could not believe that Baden would ever treat her so.

Young Shepherd came round that afternoon and invited them all to go for a drive with him, probably thinking he would have more luck with the family than with Isobel, and Annie accepted his invitation. It would be nice to drive out and see the McCubins," she said.

"Funny thing you wasn't at the tennis party, Isobel," he said en route to the somewhat taciturn young lady whom Annie had manoeuvred into the seat beside him. "All the tennis team there an' not the captain. Just like them Steelmans' biggest snobs in the country."

Isobel's lip curled and her hands

clutched to box his ears. She didn't want his sympathy but she made no answer.

"You oughter come out an' see my mother Mrs. Bennett," he went on addressing Annie. "She'd be glad to see yer. Nothin' stuck up about us there ain't."

Annie smiled. "I'd be very pleased to, Len," she said, "but I've no car, you know. Your mother could come and see me."

"Yair, o'course. But Mum never hardly goes out anywhere. Next time I'm home I'll see you all go out there I'll be home again in July. Got to leave again for school tomorrow worse luck. ole man's drivin' me down."

**D**URING the afternoon Sarah McCubbin came home as all the visitors, as well as the Steelmans, had departed that day for the city, so she was able to give details of the party. Cathy and Joan were openly interested but Isobel was very quiet.

"I heard Mrs. Steelman ask after you, Isobel," she said. "She said ' Didn't Isobel come? I thought she was in the tennis club. I think I saw her name in the paper for winning some matches.' An' they all looked silly, as if they didn't know what to say. So you see, it wasn't her fault you weren't invited."

In Isobel's private ear she said later: "Baden asked about you Isobel, how you were getting on and what you were doing now. So I told him how big you've grown, and how pretty, how well you were doing at school and at tennis."

"He said, I suppose, she wonders why I don't write. But he never said why and I guess it's got something to do with his father and that Aunt Cynthia of his. A nasty piece of work, she is."

After that there was a remarkable change in Isobel. Her cheeks were flushed and her eyes bright and she laughed and joked and played pranks just like the old Isobel. She was even

quite nice and friendly to Len. But going home she took care to push Joan into the seat of honor and squeezed herself into the back with Tony, Cathy, and Paul.

After that she was able to take all the excited babble of the girls at school without turning a hair. There was a quaint little Mona Lisa smile about her lips as though she found it all rather amusing. But she kept her ears open for all they had to say.

Various boys who were visiting with them were discussed and admired but one and all agreed that Baden was the most attractive of them all.

"Oh, I don't know," Judy Finch rolled her pale blue doll's eyes romantically. "I'd just as soon have Carl."

"You've got precious little chance of getting either," and outspoken Margot Hale. "Glenys here's the only one that the Steelman boys' eye would look at and if she doesn't go all out for Baden she's crazy."

"Oh, they're going to England next year," spoke up little Wendy Watson, who was something of a know-all. "My father does business with Mr. Steelman sometimes, and he's quite often out there, and he told him that the boys are going home to go to his old college, and then on to Oxford. So they'll probably marry English girls. You know, their father's terribly English and old-school tie."

This piece of news had a devastating effect on the little group who were quite dashed and silenced by it till Glenys recovered sufficiently to say,

"On rot, I don't believe Mr. Steelman would do that. How are they going to learn how to manage the station if they live in England? I think that's another of your tall stories, Wendy."

"Well, Mr. Steelman said so," Wendy persisted. "And he can manage his station all right, although he went to school in England."

Isobel was not the only member of her family to feel disappointed over the Steelmans' abrupt departure from Larimalara without either a visit or a message. Annie and Bert talked it over privately.

"It must be her health," Annie excused her.

Bert shook his head. "No," he said, "it was the boss. Mrs. Steelman would have come, but he has prevented her. He has no time for half-castes."

He had never forgiven Mr. Steelman for turning them away from Larimalara. He was doing better in town, but he had left a large piece of his heart at the old place.

These slights and insults to the Bennett family, whatever they did to the others to Isobel they acted as a goad, a challenge. They made her work harder at school in her class, at her play, determined to excel, to "show them". She wanted to hit back with all her might, and that was the only way she could think to do it. Each fresh hurt only served to harden and strengthen her character.

Never once did it occur to her to feel resentment against her family, to exult in her own white skin. On the contrary all her feelings of chivalry and loyalty were aroused by their plight; her bitterness was all against the white people who had forced these things upon her.

Little by little she elevated herself the champion of the colored children in the school, always ready to stand up and demand justice for them to excuse their shortcomings and point to any of their virtues, often to the embarrassment of her teachers.

She tried to improve them, too, took them to task for unkindness, dilatoriness,

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non-attendance, and most of all for servility: "For goodness' sake, don't be always makin' a doormat of yourself. You're as good as they are," she would say.

This attitude was quite inexplicable to her classmates, and made them angry and indignant. They had felt so gracious and generous in accepting her that they expected in return full co-operation, and even a little humility. Surely she was not expecting them to accept the whole half-caste population along with her? That was the worst of those people give them an inch and they wanted a mile.

Glenys felt that Isobel was being unnecessarily and foolishly chivous and took her to task over it.

"Give up, Iso," she said. "Why're you always fighting about the niggas and pulling up with girls like Petal and Nellie Adams? They're not in your class, nor your sisters' either. They haven't the home or the mother you have."

"That's just it, Glenys," answered Isobel warmly. "They haven't had the chances we have, and because they haven't, we turn up our noses, and look down on them. It's not fair."

Glenys shrugged. "Maybe it's not," she admitted, "but you won't mind things by getting down to their level. What good can you ever get out of going with Petal or Nellie? No one will have anything to do with you if you have friends like that. Why cut off your nose to spite your face?"

"Who has anything to do with me now?" retorted Isobel hotly. "Only you, perhaps. The others girl don't like me. I've nothing to lose by going with half-castes."

"And what would you gain? You don't really like them, you know."

Isobel was silent, and a thoughtful look came into her eyes. "What about all that stuff in the Bible about doing good to others, and loving each other?" she said. "Haven't you ever heard of that?"

Glenys looked astonished, and amused. "Gosh, Iso, you're getting religious," she said. "Going in for missionary stuff, are you?"

Isobel's face grew wistful. "Well, it isn't at all what I had thought of doing," she said in a resigned voice. "But I've been thinking lately that someone ought to do it, and why not me?"

"Gee! But—but what could you do?"

"Well, I don't quite know. But for a start I'd try and make them feel that I, for one, thought they weren't just trash, and that I didn't even notice they weren't just the same as white girls. You know, Petal's quite pretty, and Nellie's very good in class."

"Ye-es. Very nice and sporting of you, and all that," admitted Glenys. "But your mother—you told me she worries about you, and feels she's let you down. don't you think she'll feel worse about it if you are friendly with the half-castes?"

Yes, Isobel knew that, and when she tried to convert her mother to her way of thinking by suggesting that she invite Petal and Nellie home to tea, her mother looked at her in astonished consternation.

"Isobel!" she cried. "Why should you want to cultivate girls like that?"

There was such hurt indignation in her mother's look and tone, that, for a moment, Isobel almost gave up her cause, then she said patiently:

"Mum, suppose Mrs. Finch or Mrs. Watson or, better still, Dr. Dahl's wife should ask us in there one Sunday night to tea. Wouldn't you feel pleased about it?"

"Ye-es," said her mother slowly and warily, then hesitating. "I—I—I admit I would be pleased, and very pleased if you were an evening guest."

with the decent white people of this town. We need not mince matters, Isobel, we've been over it before, but we both know that fraternising with the colored race is not to our best interests."

"Well, Mum, don't you see, that's just what it means to them. If we took them up and were kind to them it would give them a lift — improve their opinion of themselves. It's hard to hold up your head when you know everyone looks down on you. And, as far as we're concerned, why should we run after the white people and pretend to be something that we're not?"

"But that's just it, Isobel. We've got to hold our heads up and make people respect us and realise that we're just as good as they are, despite our little touch of color."

And argue as she would, her mother was adamant. Her mission was not to uplift the black race, but to make a place in the white world for her children, and it angered and dismayed her to find Isobel actually working against her. So vehement was she in the matter that Isobel decided at last that it would be better to give in to her for the time being, but carry the favor of the white people she never would.

**E**ASTER was approaching again. Summer had been long, tedious, and enervating, but the children seldom minded this. They loved summer. And for Isobel there had been tennis.

It had been glorious. They went from conquest to conquest. Isobel became champion girl of the District Junior Tennis Club, winning a silver cup, and the school a shield.

There was great excitement in Wogina over this, and the Parents and Citizens' Association gave them a great spread in the Town Hall, where the presentations were to be made, and Mr. Shepherd, who was Road Board President that year, made a very pretty speech when handing Isobel her cup, getting slightly mixed between Venus, Cleopatra, and Miss Australia, declaring she was prettier than the lot of them put together.

Annie did not go, though, of course, invited. She had an instinctive feeling that the presence of Bert and herself would create a tension that would somehow spoil her daughter's triumph. But, during the evening she and Bert stole quietly along to a side window where they could see without being seen.

Bert, full of excitement, could not keep quiet, despite Annie's continual efforts to shush him.

"They're all round Isobel," he chuckled. "they all want to dance with her. See, there's young Shepherd. He's going to get her — no — here's someone else. Why, it's Baden, Baden Steelman. Yes, they're home, just arrived this evening. I heard at Wilson's. He's grown a big handsome lad... Ah, Isobel makes no mistake now. She's going to dance with Baden, and they make a pretty pair

"Oh," gasped Annie. "She dropped the other boy like a hot potato, as soon as she saw Baden. Young Shepherd looks furious."

"Oh, but Isobel and Baden were always pals, it's only natural she would give preference to him. And look, there's Carl and he's dancing with our little Joan. How pretty Joan looks tonight, Annie, with those little red roses in her hair. Carl always had a fondness for Joan, just as Baden does for Isobel."

"Yes," Annie said, but her heart

said that Isobel and Joan must get rid of these boys out of their heads. No good could come of it. "Crying for the moon," as she called it.

Bert prattled all the way home, his romantic soul delighted to see the young friends united again but Annie answered him in only monosyllables. She saw it only as a cloud in their sky threatening trouble.

She was not alone in this. Mr. Steelman, his wife and two boys had arrived by car in Wogina late that afternoon from Perth, the boys having anticipated their holidays by a few days because their mother had expressed a great desire to spend Easter at her home, Laralara, and as soon as the doctor allowed her to travel they set out.

They had intended going directly to Laralara but Mrs. Steelman was so tired when they reached Wogina, that they decided to halt there for the night and go on home in the morning. The excitement in the small town over the school festival infected the boys, and when they learned of the party Isobel was playing, they accepted the invitation sent hastily to them. Baden was learning to be a little more self-reliant and independent of the paternal yoke.

Isobel and Baden had eyes for no one but each other. They had not realised how much they meant to each other until they met again.

"Isobel. How tall you've grown! And oh gosh, you're pretty."

"You've grown too, Baden. You're half a head over me, and I'll tell you something. You're quite the best looking boy in the room. I think so, anyway."

"So you're a big tennis champion, eh? You always were good at games, Iso. But the kids, Tony and Joan and Cathy, Paul, too, it's incredible how they've grown."

"It's been a long time since you saw them," she reminded him gently.

He stole a look at her. It was difficult for him to explain, so he just said awkwardly,

"We've hardly been at Laralara at all; since mother has been sick. I suppose you thought that I had forgotten you."

"Yes, I did, naturally, and I guess you didn't think very much about me either, after you got away from here, now did you?"

He looked embarrassed for a moment, then said caudilly: "Well, a fellow has a lot to think of at school, with lessons and everything. But I did remember you, Isobel, deep down. I always meant to come back for you some day."

"I always meant to come back for you some day!"

The words sang a beautiful cadence in her heart, her cheeks flushed and her hand in his trembled with delight.

"Oh, Baden," she said, "you don't mean that, surely. We were only kids then, you know."

"Yes, I do mean it," he said seriously. "Iso, you haven't forgotten that, have you?"

They had stopped dancing and were sitting on a form in a deserted corner of the room, quite oblivious to everyone but themselves.

"I've still got the knife you gave me," Isobel said shyly.

He laughed. "Nice sort of engagement ring, wasn't it. I'll get you a better one some day. There'll be an other girl for me ever, Iso, I swear it."

Engagement! Isobel trembled. Her hand slipped into his and they gazed into each other's eyes rapturously, heedless of the whispers and envious glances directed at them from various parts of the room.

"Mother would like to see you, Iso," he said at last. "She was always fond of you, and she's only at the hotel."

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It's only 9 o'clock. Will you come down with me and see her?"

"I'd love to," she said.

Going down the long, ill-lit street they held hands, and though Isobel rattled away, she hardly knew what she was saying. Her mind was full of this new exhilaration that she was experiencing.

She knew what it was; she was in love, she told herself. Always before she had been fond of Baden, but now she loved him—adored him. Her feet hardly seemed to touch the earth.

"Isobel, my child, but you're lovely!" Mrs. Steelman propped up among her pillows, looked at the glowing girl, noting every detail of the party frock Annie had made her of softest blue organdie, sewn with tiny pink rosebuds, saw too the shapely legs, the slim ankles and wrists and tapering fingers; all the marks of good breeding. She saw in her the daughter that she had always so ardently desired.

She did not miss the light in the girl's eyes when she looked at Baden, and she knew what that meant . . . It meant that she might possibly have her for a daughter after all. John would not like it. John with his high and mighty ideas, and he and Cynthia had already picked out someone for Baden in England.

But Cynthia wasn't going to ruin her boy's life for him, she had far too much say in their affairs as it was. And if Isobel and Baden wanted each other . . . But she was very tired, so "good-night, children dear, Isobel, I'll send you a pretty trinket to wear."

Then she stopped and looked from one to the other thoughtfully. "It'll be a fight," she said half to herself. "Yes, it will be a great fight, but I think between the three of us we'll manage it."

Then she lay back on her pillows and closed her eyes wearily.

Going back he drew her into the shelter of a pepper tree, drew her close and kissed her here.

"You heard what Mother said," he whispered. "It'll be a fight . . . She means Dad and Aunt Cyn. But I'll fight. Will you wait for me, Isobel?"

Isobel's heart nearly jumped out of her breast. "Oh, Baden, I'll wait for you forever," she said. "I love you, oh, how I love you, and I'll work like mad to make myself good enough for you."

Mr. Steelman, after a day shut up in the car, was enjoying wandering through the town. He saw the two young people go into the shadow of the tree, and spent an impatient ten minutes waiting for them to emerge.

It had not been by any wish of his that the boys had gone to the party, and when he had looked in at the hall, the sight of Baden and Isobel, Carlyle and Joan, dancing together, did not reassure him.

But he kept remembering Cynthia's dire predictions: "But suppose Baden or Carl should want to marry Joan or Cathy!"

Ridiculous, he told himself. They were just children . . . But still . . . it was dangerous . . . and Isobel, she was, yes, there was no denying that she was outstanding. Dangerous, yes, very dangerous.

And then Baden kissing Isobel under the tree was the last straw.

He loved Laralara, was proud of it, and had hoped to hand it on to his sons, but tomorrow he was putting it on the market. There were other places . . . Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, or possibly he would leave Australia altogether and buy somewhere else. He preferred Australia, of course, and Laralara, but he must make a

sacrifice to prevent his boys making fools of themselves and marrying into colored families.

Three weeks later the Steelmans left for England. A manager was left in charge of Laralara, which at the last moment Mr. Steelman decided not to sell. Mrs. Steelman's health was given as the reason of the sudden move—advice of a London doctor and they would be in England for the spring.

Isobel did not see Baden again—his father took care of that, but she had a card from him en route, and later on a letter, describing his trip and first impressions of England. He seemed very interested in all that he saw, and it was quite evident that he was enjoying himself.

He and Carl had been entered for Harrow and would go there as soon as they had had a short holiday and a tour of England. If she did not hear from him often she must not mind, things might be difficult for a while, but in four years he would be 21, then . . . Isobel guessed that some parental pressure had been brought to bear on him, and for a time he would have to obey.

But the tone of his letter disturbed her. It was so bright and full of interest in things that were so far beyond her, so very foreign to her that she despaired of ever being able to reach him to "talk the same language."

It seemed to her inevitable that, in such surroundings, with so many new friends, he must change. And there had been no word of love in his letter, chummy and brotherly, but Isobel's hungry heart craved something more.

Isobel's bright hopes and exquisite joy were dashed by this sudden departure. She saw it as the hand of fate moving against her, and reverted to her old idea of never marrying and working for the betterment of the colored peoples.

**T**HOUGH Bert had been very happy about his new work, its good pay and its independence, and that he could have a living in the town, he missed his old mates at Laralara.

He had no friends in the town, and he soon realised that he was unlikely to make any. White men, though they liked and respected him, would not "cobbler up" with him.

However democratic a man might be, some unwritten law forbade that he admit a black to his personal friendship, on an equality basis.

On the station they had hardly remembered that he was a black, but the townspeople were more discriminating.

He was extremely proud of his home, and the progress his children were making at school, but he was out of his element in the town. Having all his life studiously assimilated white ways and ideas, he had almost come to regard himself as white, and looked doubtfully at his fellow half-castes (full blacks were seldom seen so far south), full of contempt for their shiftlessness and unhygienic ways. Now he found himself isolated between the two races, belonging to neither.

But he had to employ casual help from time to time, and the best cattlemen available were half-castes. Thus he was thrown back on his own race, and in the loneliness of his heart he turned to them as he had never done before.

And he found his heart going out to these men, so primitive, so uneducated, so far behind even him. Not one of them knew the comfort of a decent

home, the joy of cleanliness, the interest and absorption of education, and above all, the dignity that went with these things.

Not he realised, till they were lifted up to a full measure of them, till they became the intellectual equals of the white man, would they be accorded the respect and equality that was so rigorously denied them now.

How this could be done he did not know. It might come in time, but it would be a very long time at the rate they were going. He could do nothing about it, but it made him more sympathetic in his dealings with them. But he was still lonely, not a little bewildered by this sis' ye isolation in which he found himself.

Annie had not confided any of her problems and difficulties to him, first because she was loath to hurt him unnecessarily, but largely because she thought that he would not understand. So she kept silent, playing for the first time a lone hand, and driving, although unconsciously a slight wedge between them. And in the same way his reactions towards his own people quite escaped her.

It was a shock to her then, when he returned from a long driving trip up north, bringing with him as off-side a young black with whom he was on the most friendly and affectionate terms.

He introduced Hector to her joyfully and proudly, making it plain that he expected her to gain as much pleasure from the new friend as he did.

She could not but admit that Hector Noyes was a fine specimen of a native; six feet two in his socks, and built in proportion. He was a three-quarter-caste, his father being a full black, and his mother a half-caste. He had remarkably regular features for a black, though his skin was a dark bronze—darker than Bert's. He looked on the world as though it were his oyster and carried himself with the ease of a conqueror.

He was dressed in a somewhat picturesque cowboy outfit, having taken part in a rodeo on the way down, and had a steel guitar slung across his shoulders. His mount was in keeping with the rest of him.

But all this splendor was lost on Annie. She watched with dismay, feeling that he was just another menace to her plans, but when he approached her with outstretched hand, confident as any white boy would be something in his winning smile won her over, and she took him at his own valuation.

She learned his story from Bert. In the north he was something of a legend. He was 21, born on a cattle station where his father was killed in an accident. The boss, who had always liked him, took him into the household and brought him up with his own youngsters.

The lad had been extraordinarily quick to learn, capable and reliable. There seemed nothing he could not do. A champion rough rider, he could cut out a bullock with the best; he was a first-class motor mechanic as well as driver; he could cook, play football, box, dance, sing and perform expertly on the guitar and the piano-accordion.

Bert had obtained his services, not because he was in need of a job. There was always plenty of demand for Hector, but the two had become firm friends, and Bert induced him to come south for the trip with the cattle, promising him a good bonus if they landed the beasts safely.

Hector, eager for a change, a look at another part of the country, and with an idea in his mind of striking out and bettering himself, had come. He recognised Bert as an unusual type of aboriginal, much superior in intellect

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to the general run, and he had been drawn towards him, for Hector, too, had brains and ambition.

Annie, though inwardly dismayed, tactfully made the best of the situation, and treated Hector as cordially as though he had been one of the Steelman boys. She knew that Bert could not see the thing the way she did. Indeed, she could find no fault with Hector himself.

His manners were perfect; he was both respectful and considerate for her and for the girls. He was clean and tidy, and he had such a pleasant personality that she knew she would have thoroughly enjoyed having him there if it had not been for the thought of the Freyers and the other white neighbors and their slogan: "We don't want a blackie up in our street."

However, she consoled herself with the thought that he would soon go away; none of the natives stayed long anywhere.

And Bert seemed another person since he had come. The children, too, idolised him, and all the little boys in the town came clustering about their yard to watch him, listen to him, proud if he noticed or spoke to them. Was he not the champion rough rider of all the rodeos?

**W**ITH Hector's help, Bert was able to take on more work. Hector could take charge of a mob of cattle or sheep and deliver them, leaving Bert free for other engagements. In a short while no one thought of getting anyone else to do their driving but Bert and Hector.

But for Annie the whole episode of Hector was one of misery. She could take no pride in the fact that he damed the town that he made the blacks seem less repugnant. He only stressed the point that to her was all important, the fact that her children had black blood in their veins. He somehow seemed to make their color two or three shades darker and destroyed her efforts to whitewash them with civilisation.

As weeks and months went by, Annie's health began to suffer. She had been ailing in secret for some time and Dr. Dain, whom she had quietly visited, advised an operation in the Mullewa hospital—advice that she chose to ignore.

Who, she asked herself, could she get to look after her family? And Dr. Dain did not say it was a matter of life or death so she went on for some weeks, suffering pain, growing thinner, until at last she collapsed and Isabel, in fear, ran for the doctor. "An operation and at once," he ordered. "I'll run you over myself this afternoon."

"Oh, doctor, I can't. There's no one here to—"

"But Mum," said Isabel, "I'm here. I'm 14 now, and I don't have to be at school. I can cook the meals and look after everyone."

"Of course she can," said Dr. Dain, "and you're coming whether you want to or no."

It seemed strange at home without Mum. Her operation was a success, but there were complications that kept her long in hospital. She was there, in all, six weeks.

Isabel managed well, considering her inexperience. It made her realise how much her mother had done and how much she had indulged her children, never curtailing their play, their studies, or their pleasures, to gain help for herself.

He . . . we acquired a second-hand car and drove them all across to

Mullewa on Sundays, and sometimes through the week as well. It seemed most providential this car purchase, and Isabel had a secret suspicion that the convenience of the family had had something to do with the timeliness of it.

The house was not so sparkling now as in Annie's day, and Isabel's meals were sometimes scrappy, but she improved with practice, and the twins and Tony often lent a hand.

But the house seemed dead and grim without Annie's cheerful presence, and they would have been a lonely little party but for Hector.

In the evenings he told them stories; he played his piano-accordion or his banjo — on which he was giving Tony lessons. He got the twins singing and he cheered Bert up like a tonic. And he took Isabel to the pictures.

The travelling cinema paid a visit to the town each Wednesday and showed in the local hall, but the Bennetts were not picture addicts. Annie did not care for them herself and Bert was always early abed since he rose at daybreak each morning. The children, too, went to bed at an early hour — Annie was strict on that point — and she did not think that the general run of picture programmes were suitable for children, so that, incredible as it may seem, Isabel, although 14, had never — except once to a travellingogue — been to the pictures.

So when Hector invited her she went with alacrity. It made her feel grown-up and important and she was proud of her escort.

He had everything in good taste. He wore a dark tailored suit, stiff collar, and pastel tie. His shoes and his hair were equally shiny, and Isabel knew as he escorted her into the best seats that some of her classmates would be looking on and envying her.

The pictures were a revelation to her. They opened a new world of romance and she watched the beautiful women in their glamorous dresses with a new envy, a new ambition in her heart and a new determination was hardening within her. Some day, some way, she was going to be like that.

Alone she tried her hair this way and that, grimaced and smiled and smirked at herself in the mirror, tried various effects with what clothing and drapes she could muster, capered and bowed and punctuated, copying now this, now that, movie star.

She was living in a dream world, always the heroine, and the hero — sometimes he looked like Clark Gable, sometimes like Gary Cooper, but often he looked like Baden.

She was right in surmising that her classmates would have noted her appearance and her escort. As she was not attending school in her mother's absence, she was unable to see their reactions, but Jessie Bob accosted her at the store one day with:

"Gee, Isabel, ain't you lucky staying home. I s'pose you'll be putting your hair up now you're going with Hector."

Isabel bridled.

"Who said I was going with Hector?" she said snappily.

"Why, everybody says so, and everybody's a-thinking when you're going to get married."

"It's a good idea if they'd mind their own business," cut in Isabel hotly. "Just because I've been to the pictures with Hector I'm not going to marry him. Why, I'm only fourteen and I'm going back to school to get my Junior as soon as Mum's home and better . . . Married, my foot."

And with glowing cheeks Isabel stamped angrily away.

But others had taken stock of it, too, and there was quite a little current of scandal running round the town. "There, now, I told you so," was a stock phrase. "Well, what could you expect?" Dire predictions followed, and inevitably the crocodile tears. "Such a lovely girl it's a crying shame."

So that Annie had hardly got inside her own home again when she was visited by the police sergeant no less, who told her that the whole town was talking about her daughter and the young black Hector.

Annie almost fainted with horror and shock.

The sergeant, seeing her ghastly pallor, said, "I'm coming to live now," he said, "don't be alarmed I'm sure there's no harm done. But it's my duty to warn you: Isabel's under age and he's a native an' that's frowned on by the law."

"If somebody should report the case — and there's plenty in this town would be too glad to do it — the girl could be taken away from you and put into a home somewhere under the custody of the State. You'd be declared not fit to be in charge of her see? I'm only telling you for your own good. Now take my tip and let that lad go back to where he came from and in case you don't want to tackle the subject, I'll speak to Bert about it myself."

He did, and the upshot was that Bert spoke to Hector, and the latter lost no time in making himself scarce.

**P**ROMPT repercussions followed in the Bennett household. Tony rushed in to his mother, who still slept most of the time lying down in her room. His eyes were wide and startled, as though he had just encountered some major tragedy.

"Mum! Mum! Hector's leaving. He's going away," he cried while his mother reflected wryly that he had not looked nearly so upset when she departed to hospital. Still, of course, Hector was his hero. He had taught him to play the guitar, and, better still, had given him some lessons at driving his motor-car.

"And he's sold his motor-car to Mr. Wilson, and says he's going right away this afternoon. Oh, Mum, why doesn't Dad stop him?"

"He can't, dear, if Hector wants to go."

"But he said last night that he was going to take us for a picnic to Den-gara next weekend. I can't think what's got into him."

Joan went openly, and Cathy, more practical, gathered up and washed all his handkerchiefs, shirts, and socks lying about his room, while Paul worked feverishly on one of the many unfinished portraits of his hero.

Isabel was puzzled and curious. "It's so sudden," she told her mother. "He seemed quite happy here, and Dad was going to take him into partnership, and he was thinking of buying Bates' paddock out on the Mullewa road."

Her mother scrutinised her closely to see her reactions, but she could see no sign of grief; there was only the regret she might have shown at any friend's departure.

"Oh, well, you know, Isabel, he's an aboriginal and they come and go very suddenly. They're not very dependable really."

Isabel looked at her a little censoriously, her sense of loyalty a little shocked. As if Dad wasn't an abo, and was he not dependable?

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Annie was indeed glad to be rid of him, but she could not help wishing that they had not done things quite so hurriedly. Such a sudden exodus of such a striking person might give rise to more talk.

She was right. The small town buzzed with the news of Hector's departure right on top of Mrs. Bennett's return from Hospital. Though nothing was known of the sergeant's visit, it was surmised that she had found a "situation" at home which resulted in the dismissal of Hector.

Rumor mounted on rumor. Here was a chance for the lower elements of the town to exercise their powers of imagination, which they did. For a while, the whole Bennett family was very unhappy over it all.

At length, however, the gossip died down. Isobel went back to school, and at the end of the year took her Junior exam, won fresh laurels at tennis.

**E**ARLY the following year news arrived that shattered the district. Isobel heard it from a boy in Wilson's store.

"Those you've heard the news," he said importantly. "Just come through by cable from England. Mrs. Steelman's dead."

"Dead! Mrs. Steelman! Oh!"

Isobel went deathly white and her head felt dizzy. She closed her eyes and saw again the wan face looking at her from the pillows with that affectionate, wistful look, heard again the words: "Isobel, you're lovely; it'll be a battle but between the three of us we'll manage it."

And now, she was gone, her most powerful ally. Not that she had really hoped anything from her, but still, while she lived one couldn't help hoping a little.

But apart from that she felt intensely sad. She was back again in the old days at Laridara. She thought of Baden, too, and what this would mean to him.

The news touched all her family profoundly. They remembered only Mrs. Steelman's kindness, and her recent neglect of them was forgiven. She seemed to them like an aunt or a relative, somebody really their own, and they set about at once writing letters to the boys and Mr. Steelman, little dreaming of the change it was to bring into their own lives.

Just six weeks after Mrs. Steelman's death Annie received a letter from a firm of Perth solicitors, Sterne, Steel, and Phillipson, to her great surprise.

"Whatever can this be?" she said, "I thought it portended something evil."

"Well, open it and see," Bert advised her. "It won't bite you," and he laughed gaily. The children stood round expectantly, full of eager curiosity.

With all manner of fears gathering in her heart, Annie gingerly broke the seal. . . . After she had read the first lines her eyes glowed with excitement.

"Oh Isobel," she cried. "Mrs. Steelman has left you a legacy."

She put the letter down without reading further and looked round at her gaping family.

"A legacy!" echoed Bert in amazement. "Oh, Iso, you are lucky."

"Oh, Iso, you'll be able to buy lovely dresses," cried Joan, and Tony shouted excitedly: "Now we'll be able to have a motor car!"

But Isobel was looking very startled, and a trembling had seized her.

"What—what else does it say?" she faltered, while her heart seemed to beat in her throat.

Annie bent her eyes to the letter again and read in silence, and then, to their surprise she dropped the letter and burst into tears.

"Oh, cruel, cruel," was all they could get from her as she laid her head on her arms and wept. Tony snatched the letter from the floor, but his father took it from him and read on.

"What does it say, Dad?" Isobel crawled over his shoulder while he read out metitiously the rest of the letter.

It was to the effect that the money was left to her on condition that she severed all connection with her family and entered a college in Perth where she would be under the guardianship of a certain Mrs. Rochelle, who was to train her for any career she should choose to take.

If, after 12 months, things proved satisfactory to all parties, papers for the signing over of the guardianship of her daughter would be forwarded to Mrs. Bennett, and Isobel would proceed to England for the completion of her education. She would receive an adequate sum to set her up in whatever career she had decided to adopt.

The little party was too stunned even to gasp. The children's bright visions vanished and an air of tragedy took their place. Isobel's face was deathly white, and Bert looked at her anxiously, a pained question in his eyes.

But Isobel, when she got over the first shock, began to see the wonderful possibilities of the situation. College, Perth, England, finishing school, career.

In that moment all the groomed, glamorous women of the screen seemed to beckon to her. She would be one of them, poised, correct, able to take her place anywhere—and she would be in England.

Baden was in England and his mother had done this so that she would be absolutely and perfectly fitted to be his wife. The prospect was so wonderful as to quite blind her to all other contingencies. No one but a mad woman would refuse a chance like this.

"Oh, Mum, don't you see what it will mean to me?" she cried. "Don't you see the chance it's going to give me? To be educated like that; I'll be a real lady, and fit to marry anyone then. Oh, it's a wonderful, wonderful chance."

They were silent, gazing at her in hurt surprise.

"Yes," said Cathy, "but it means you go away from us and not see us any more."

Isobel caught her breath sharply as the other side of the picture caught her. But she could not, would not see it as they did.

"Of course it doesn't," she said. "After my education's finished I can do what I like, and then I'll come back to you all and help you."

But they looked unconvinced. Joan spoke up next:

"But you'll be too grand for us then," she said, "and when you've married Baden you won't come back any more."

"Is that all you think of me?" Isobel retorted hotly. "And who says I'm going to marry Baden?"

"You know very well you want to, and I guess if you go to England you will."

Tony alone seemed to see promise in the situation.

"Gee whiz, Iso," he said, "that'll be just snifter. Then you and Baden could come back and live at Laridara, an' we could all go back there again."

"But," protested Cathy timidly, "if you took all that money, an' then came back to us, wouldn't it be cheating?"

Didn't Mrs. Steelman say she'd give you the money if you give us up?"

And so they argued back and forth, Isobel and the children, for Bert and Annie said not a word, though by their silence they were in accord with the children's viewpoint.

At last, in exasperation, Isobel turned to her mother:

"It isn't that way at all, Mum. I know it isn't. Mrs. Steelman wanted to give me a good start in life, and when I'm twenty-one I'll come back and help the rest of you, I promise I will. Oh, Mum, you will let me go, won't you?"

"It rests with you, Isobel," Annie answered soberly. "If you want to go I will not prevent you. But you must think well, dear, before you take this step. I must say I think that Cathy is right. Six years away in England among strangers, and in a different world, would make it very easy to forget us."

"I am not saying that it may not be better for you to do so, and I don't want to stand in your light in any way. But you must look facts in the face and realise what you are doing."

"You may, as you say, come back to us when your education has been completed, but I think it very unlikely. The kind of people you would mix with then would be very different from us, and I think that you would be quite unnatural if you did not change and find it difficult to tolerate us, much less share our life."

But Isobel protested. She was going to do something big in the world, she had not quite decided what, and she was coming back to help them. She wanted to help them and she wanted to help the colored people. She could do it a great deal better with a good education.

And so she stifled the cries of conscience that told her she was lying, that smote her every time she saw her mother's stricken face, Bert's pained eyes, and her sisters' sad faces.

**M**RS. ROCHELLE, principal of Lowdon Hall, who was the "selected guardian," came to collect Isobel and very tactfully eased the parting. But even so it was painful. Bert and Annie restrained their feelings and even made a show of cheerfulness, but the children were loud in their lamentations. Isobel was their leader and protector, their big sister and their pride, and they clung to her tearfully.

Isobel almost melted and decided to stay, but she felt she had gone too far now to draw back, and the elegance and poise of Mrs. Rochelle something she so ardently wished to achieve, helped her to harden her heart against the misery in her mother's dry eyes and the streaming faces of her little sisters and brothers.

When they were alone, Mrs. Rochelle talked to her sympathetically. She was a woman of great charm and tact. She set herself to excuse gently the recent harrowing experience from Isobel's mind, to play on the shocked senses of the girl by tactfully leading her thoughts to things outside herself. "You know, Isobel," she told her kindly, "it's hurting you most dreadfully, but think of the future. You are being given a marvelous opportunity to help your family as well as yourself. You will be able to do so much for them later on. Think of that whenever you feel lonely or homesick, and now cheer up and enjoy yourself."

The excitement of the journey — Isobel had never travelled by train

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before—the charm of her companion, and the picture she drew of the life ahead, kept her heartache down to an insurance point.

But it was there, that dull ache behind all her excitement, the thought that she had betrayed her people, that she had crumpled in her hour of trial.

As they journeyed along through the night, the wheels of the train seemed to beat out the words: "Selfish, selfish, selfish," and, in spite of Mrs. Rosette's bright conversation, with "selfish" in her ears and contraction in her heart, she fell asleep.

In the week that followed there was much to divert her attention. The wonder of the forty-rooned, palatial hall with its spacious rooms and corridors, its gardens and playgrounds; the sense of academic, community life that made her breathless with anticipation.

Then there was the wonder of the city, in and out of which she constantly tripped with Mrs. Rochelle or one of the other teachers, to buy wonderful new clothes.

**T**HE other girls were still on vacation, so Isobel had a week to familiarise herself with the place before they returned. There was a wonderful library at her disposal and many charming garden nooks to read in or dream in, and a gramophone with a mountain of records.

She would take a book and retire to a sunny corner of the garden, but she did very little reading. She would sit there and think and, like a bird to its nest, her thoughts flew to her home and family.

What were they doing now? Were they missing her? Did they despise her because she had gone and left them? Had she done right or not? Had she not sold herself away from her family? Was she not a despicable creature?

No. Another part of her mind answered back. She was perfectly right to take this wonderful opportunity that had been offered to her. What could she have done for her people had she stayed at home? What could she ever have achieved there, despised by the town?

Now she could have a profession—perhaps she'd be a doctor. When she returned in about seven years she would be in a position to really do something.

And so she would pursue a train of self-justification that restored her to happiness, for a time. But not for long. She would think of Joan and Cathy, the former growing up so prettily, and Cathy so full of talent. What was to become of them? Who would stand up for them now that she was gone?

One thing she felt sure of. They would be wise to stay in Wagga. So far as she could see there was no place for them in the city. She had, in her journeys to and from the city, looked in vain for an aboriginal or even a half or quarter-caste. When she asked Mrs. Rochelle about it she said:

"Oh, they are to be found in the lower parts of the city, but not anywhere where you will be. But you want to forget all about them now. You are starting a new life, you know, and aborigines have no part in it. You are done with them forever."

This, from a woman who a week ago had assured her that she was "doing it for her family" and that "she

would be able to help them later on, gave a profound shake to Isobel's faith in Mrs. Rochelle's sincerity. She hadn't meant a word of it, and if she made any attempt to contact her people, she had no doubt that her new guardian would make things very difficult for her.

She had meant to approach Mrs. Rochelle about writing home, but now she felt that the suggestion would be coldly received. It certainly was in the contract that she was to have no dealings with her family, and she had a strong feeling that Mrs. R. would have that condition strictly adhered to.

But Isobel knew she must get a few lines to her mother. In her room she quickly wrote, reassuring Annie as to her happiness, telling of the wonderful college, the beautiful clothes she was getting. She sent love and kisses to them all. "You had better not write," she added. "But I'll manage to send you a line from time to time."

Now to get it posted without Mrs. Rochelle knowing. She was not allowed outside the grounds by herself, and if she left it on the hall table for posting, it would be seen.

to give me an education on condition that I gave up my family, and I did."

Having delivered herself of this bald statement she waited for his condemnation. It was a confession that her aching soul had been burning to make. Mrs. Rochelle had warned her against giving any of her fellow students the slightest inkling of the fact, but this young man looked so nice and kindly that she felt she could safely confide in him.

"I see," he said calmly. "And you're not finding it so easy. Do you really think you'll be able to go through with it?"

"Yes," she said. "I want to breathe then I'll be able to do something for them. If I go back home I can't do much because no one thinks anything of you if you're an abo or mixed up with them. I'm all right but I know they'll be lonely and will be delighted to hear from me. I don't think it's very wrong of me, do you?"

"I can't see that it is... No, certainly not. But what about replies? How will you get on about that?"

She shrugged. "I shan't be able to get any, but I'll still write to them sometimes if I can manage it."

"Well," he said, unwinding the Scotty from around his legs. "I often pass this way in the evenings, exercising my dog, so I'll keep a look-out for you in future, and if you want anything posted or anything done at all I'm at your service."

"You're awfully kind. And you can't think how it's helped me to tell somebody about it—I've felt such a worm."

"Well, I don't see why," he assured her. "I think you've done a sensible thing. Everyone has a right to do the best they can for themselves, and your family will be glad and proud of you some day. What are you going to be?"

"I don't know yet. P'raps a doctor. I'm going to England next year."

"Oh, that will be very nice for you. By the way, I've got a cousin going to that school, about your age, I should think, and a very nice kid, too. Name's Nancy Lamb... I'll mention you to her if you like. My name's Dick Dorman."

"Ye-es." Her face registered alarm. "You won't say anything about my family will you? Mrs. Rochelle said I must particularly mustn't."

"No, of course I won't." "And my name's Isobel Bennett... I think I'd better go now. Good-bye and thanks ever so much."

The Scotty plainly welcomed the order to move on and trotted briskly along ahead of his master, who was still wondering whether it was all true or just a dream, and carrying away a vision he was not to forget—a vision of an angel face peering at him through the branches of a willow tree.

**S**

TUDYING her new school-fellows with appraising and critical eyes, Isobel liked little of what she saw. So many of them were snobbish and affected. Then there were the tomboys, the devil-may-care good sports, inclined to bang doors, smoke surreptitiously, and stomp mannishly.

Most of them were selfish; the good things of life had been handed to them on a platter and they took them for granted. From infancy they had been taught the world was theirs to do what they liked with.

That was what Isobel thought of them, and try as she would she could not bring herself to feel one of them. She wondered would she ever cease to feel an interloper in their midst. And then she would ask herself, if they represent the upper classes, why on earth am I trying to become like them?

"I—can't write to my mother on account of she's an abo," blurted out the angel, her lip trembling.

The young man stared in astonishment. "A—an abo! Your mother! Why, you look fair enough for the Snow Maiden."

"Well, she's not exactly, but she's married to one, and that's just as bad. All my brothers and sisters—they're step-brothers and sisters—are quarter-castes. And I'm supposed to have nothing more to do with them."

"I—see." He looked at her thoughtfully. "Your father's people sent you here, I suppose?"

"No. A woman left money in her will

Very few of them were what she called "Real People," but there were about half-a-dozen or so. She looked anxiously for Nancy Lamb, and was pleased indeed to find that she was a genuinely charming girl. Nancy came up to her at the end of the first day.

"Are you Isabel Bennett?" she asked, and then added, "Yes you must be. You're the only girl in the place that looks like an angel... my cousin Dick told me about you. He said I'd know you, because you looked like a fairy or an angel; he wasn't sure which."

Isobel laughed and blushed, but Nancy rattled on:

"He told me that you got him to post a letter to the boy-friend. That was clever of you, and you picked a pretty reliable messenger... He's tickled pink in fact I think he's quite struck. You must come home with me some time and meet him properly."

Listening to their exchange of after-holiday news, Isobel realised that she was certainly among the daughters of the aristocracy of her State. It was not easy to get into that school, and only Mrs. Steelman's influence had been able to do it for her.

She was probably the only nobody there, but her outstanding looks soon made a place for her, and she carried her head as proudly as anybody else.

Mrs. Rochelle had been careful to introduce her as "my little friend from Lardara Station." Wogina was meant to be blotted right out of her mind. But one day when one of the girls who had returned from Adelaide by overland train described the blacks she had seen while crossing the desert as "dirty creatures, they should make them stay in the bush," Isobel's heart suddenly grew hot and her face flushed scarlet. Mrs. Rochelle saw what was coming and said quickly:

"Isobel doesn't like to hear statements like that, Diane. She's used to station life, where there are lots of blacks who are respected."

**F**OR a time Isobel found the loneliness terrible. It took her all her time not to write to Annie for the money to come home. Two things prevented her: it would have been such a climb-down to go back to Wogina and acknowledge failure, and then there was the thought of Baden.

Every day she was being more and more fitted to enter his world. She was becoming accustomed to luxuries, to carrying herself in a certain way, to speaking in a certain way, to feeling in a certain way. Things that at first had struck her as exaggerated and exotic now were taken for granted. Wogina and home were slowly but surely growing fainter, and when she had established herself as one of the tennis champions of the school she had "arrived."

A firm friendship had sprung up between herself and Nancy Lamb, but she still allowed Nancy to believe the fiction of the boy-friend, thinking that Nancy might, with the best intentions in the world, some day let slip the truth.

Nancy had obtained permission on two occasions to take her to her home for holiday week-ends, and on each occasion she had met Dick Dorman. Her letters home were penned ready to slip into his hand. Dick was always pleasant and consoling, a realist, he encouraged her in her endeavor. Such a good object, he told her, was worth a little duplicity that could not be well avoided. But realistic though he was, he approved of her efforts to reassure her mother.

Indeed, he could have given her some very upsetting news at her third visit,

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and was wondering whether he should or should not do so. Schoolgirls, he knew, did not as a rule see the newspapers—or did they?

"I suppose you've heard nothing from home?" he said as he slipped her letter into his breast pocket.

"No, not a word," she replied. "But Mum said if anything really serious happened, such as an accident or dangerous illness, she would let me know. So I conclude they're all right."

She looked so serene and so charming, and she was looking forward to playing in the Inter-school Tennis Championships. No, he hadn't the heart to spoil it all up, he did not see what good it would do if he did. So he held his peace. Evidently her people were not telling her, so why should he?

It was Easter again. Isobel had been gone twelve months. To Annie it seemed like twelve years, but she had come through the worst of her grief and was able to take comfort from various aspects of the situation. She could at last see that Isobel had indeed been very fortunate.

Isobel's letters had given Annie great comfort. They proved that Isobel had not forgotten them, nor did she believe that in future she would remain completely aloof. "She's my girl still," she told herself over and over as she went about her household duties.

Their home seemed so much quieter and duller now, something vital had gone out of it with Isobel. The children missed her almost as much as their mother, but life, changing and expanding for them from day to day, soon filled in the gaps, but there was always the underlying resentment that Isobel had deserted them.

The twins were now fourteen. Joan, pretty and vivacious, Cathy quiet and gentle. Both girls were clever at music, but Cathy excelled. At the examinations, held under the auspices of the London College of Music, Cathy was awarded the gold medal for merit in her class over all children in the State, and Joan passed with distinction.

They had gone down to Dongara for the examinations and had stayed for a week as guests of the convent.

When they returned, Joan was full of the delights of the convent buildings, the gardens, the fun they had had on the beach, fishing and swimming with the other girls. But Cathy, with a happy smile on her face, had told her mother, "I know what I'm going to be when I'm grown up."

"And what's that?" queried Annie curiously.

"A nun," whispered the girl.

Annie was delighted. What more could she desire? Everyone no matter what their creed, admired and revered the white-clad sisters. She could hardly imagine anything better for her daughter.

Bert smiled when she told him. "So little Cathy has fallen in love with the sisters and the convent," he said, "and wants to be a nun. I could wish nothing better for her, but remember, Annie, she is only 14 and before she is 18 she might have changed her mind several times. Wait till she falls in love with some nice boy. She'll forget all about the convent then."

Annie hoped she would not, for where the "nice boy" was to come from she did not know. Both girls were shy and took little part in events outside their own home or their school. And Bert had expressed the problem that worried her not a little now that the twins were growing up. What was to happen to them once they reached womanhood?

"Nice boys, the kind she really wanted for them, would not marry girls with aboriginal blood, she knew, in the simplicity of her heart she had hoped it might be that way; that they would be accepted as whites, marry whites, become assimilated, their black strains gradually bred out till none remained.

But now she feared for them. For Joan at least she knew would have all the yearnings and desires of healthy, natural womanhood—love, marriage, children. But all she could see for her in that field was either another half-caste or a second-rate white man who would not be "fussy" about a drop of dark blood.

It was an ugly problem. For Tony and Paul, too, where were they to get wives later on when they were old enough to marry? Her heart misgave her, as she realised that they would have to pick from second or even third-rates if they wanted to marry white women.

Tony had always been popular at school, daring in sport, always good-tempered. He was a well-known figure with his mouth-organ, his bright black eyes and his merry grin. But he had a great propensity for getting into mischief.

**O**NCE in a stone-throwing competition, Tony had broken a street lamp; the boys had scuttled off, but Tony was easily identified and bore the full brunt. Then he had, with others, been caught while raiding an orchard, and he had been with a party of boys who had damaged the remote golf house.

All these were just acts of boyish vandalism and a small fine or a good talking-to had been the only penalty, but three of the boys were half-castes, and although at least an equal number of the boys were white, it was easy and popular to give the half-castes the bulk of the blame.

"What can you expect of our boys when they have to mix with those half-castes?" was a common cry of the white mothers, so when a boys' club was formed with a view to keeping the lads out of mischief half-caste boys were taboo.

It was a bitter pill for the colored boys to be excluded from the fascinating club with its gymnasium, where the white boys were coached in boxing and wrestling, and played badminton, table tennis, quoits and bowls. Boy-like, they hung about, peering with hungry eyes through the windows. Tony joined this little throng.

They would wander aimlessly round the street, after they had tired of peering in at the club window, looking for any excitement that might be offering; if they had any money they bought soft drinks at the fruit shop.

One evening, after they had desultorily eyed the white boys filing into their club, Tony and two of his pals, Jimmy Brown and Eddy Purvis—a brother of Pesal—sauntered round to Mason Street where there was "something doing" at the Masonic Temple.

They watched with interest as men in very correct and (to them) unfamiliar evening dress emerged from cars and trucks drawn up all along the street and entered the temple.

"There goes George Hadberry," said Tony, a catch of interest in his voice as his sharp eyes picked out the familiar car. For Hadberry had been the purchaser of Hector's old bus, that had been the darling of Tony's heart, and in which he had learned to drive.

He saw the car drive slowly up the street, evidently seeking a space to park, and then turn into a small

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obscure right-of-way popularly known as Billy-Coat Lane. George went into the temple and Tony hit upon an idea.

Hadberry would be in there till midnight or later; nearly everyone in the town was there, it was quiet as a grave outside. Tony's hands tugged to feel the steering wheel again; he longed to make the machine shoot forward at his touch, to have again that feeling of god-like power that it gave him.

He consulted with his mates. They were more than eager, and the result was that half an hour after Hadberry had entered the temple his car was slowly and cautiously edging out of the lane into Mason Street. Then Tony steered for the back road where he was unlikely to meet any traffic.

A little nervous at first, he soon gained confidence and then the exhilaration, the joy of the adventure went to his head, he jammed his foot hard on the accelerator.

They were doing fifty—which was all the old car could do—when they struck the motor-bike. They hadn't even seen it till they felt the bump. It seemed that the rider had swerved too late to completely avoid them, grazed their mudguard and gone hurtling over the fence into a scrub paddock, and there they found him with his neck broken dead.

Terrified, they held a consultation. Tony suggested they drive him to the Mulwala hospital, though he doubted there was enough "juice" for that. But Jimmy, eldest of the three, took charge.

"What's the use when he's dead?" he said. "We'd best go back and leave the car where it was; it ain't hardly marked. No one saw us come out an' no one need know we had anything to do with it."

But, unfortunately for this plan, George Hadberry had felt ill and decided that he would go home. When he found his car missing he promptly reported the matter to the police.

Sergeant Reidy tracked the car as far as the buck road, then, getting on his motor-cycle, he arrived at the scene of the accident just as the boys were turning round to come back.

**T**HE sensation created in town by the whole sad affair was tremendous. To have been caught joy-riding in a stolen car would have been bad enough, but young Rogers' death raised the affair from serio-comedy to the grimmest tragedy.

Geoffrey Rogers was a young share-farmer working on Mr. Harrison's property. He was on his way into town that night to order a spare part for his tractor, thinking because he wanted to catch Wilson before he went to bed. His headlights were bad and soon flickered out altogether.

He was one of the most popular young men in the district; a leading footballer and cricketer. He was renowned as a worker, too, just twelve months married, and his wife had only recently given birth to a son.

The feeling against the three boys was terrific. Being half-castes seemed only to aggravate their guilt. If they had killed another black no one would have worried much but the fact that they had caused the death of a white man was something the white populace could not stomach. It cried for vengeance.

Their case was heard before the Children's Court at Geraldton, and by a strange but providential coincidence Bert's old friend, Mr. Roberts, the city barrister, happened to be there at the time.

He at once offered his services to Bert, and it was mainly due to him

that the boys were not sent off to a reformatory. The magistrate agreed to take Bert's bond for Tony, and the bond of Wally Condon for the other two boys.

Condon agreed to take the boys on to his farm for the ensuing twelve months and have them properly instructed in the rudiments of farming. Bert proposed to take Tony on a proposed driving trip to the Territory that would keep him out of mischief for many months.

But Mr. Roberts' eloquence was not the sole factor in their favor. Many old friends rallied round Bert and testified to the excellent character of both him and his wife—Wilson, Condon, Shepherd and McCubbin. Mr. Harrison, and, surprisingly, Mr. Arthur, the headmaster, came forward to give a very good character reference for not only Tony but the other two boys as well.

Another fact in their favor was that Rogers was driving without lights. Both vehicles had met on the dead centre of the road, and both had been speeding.

After the case was over, Mrs. Rogers' friends made it plain that there would be a claim for damages. They spoke of £1000, and Mr. Roberts advised Bert to settle the matter out of court if possible.

As Tony had been the most guilty in the matter, and Bert was the only one concerned who owned any property or money, he took the whole burden on himself. He offered £700, which the widow accepted.

It meant the whole of their savings, and a mortgage on the house, which they had just recently purchased from Wally Condon at the price he had paid for it himself, but they were relieved to get out of it even as well as that.

In the first shock both had seen their beloved Tony in prison for life. Now that he was restored to them again they felt they could part with anything. And they felt, too, that their boy had deprived Mrs. Rogers of her husband, and the baby of his father, and their all was little enough.

But it took a great deal out of them both. Especially as they had believed that Tony was really a member of the club—they knew nothing of the taboo.

Tony had used the club as a pretext to get out at nights—and they had allowed him to join believing that he would learn there many things that would be useful to him in his relations with other boys. His deception was the deepest hurt of all.

And it stirred up afresh the feeling between the blacks and the whites. Many self-righteous citizens wanted to banish the black community from their poor little hovels in Kangaroo Flat, sending them out as nomads into the desert. Others pointed out that, had the colored boys been admitted to the club, the tragedy never would have happened.

Annie wondered where she had failed in the upbringing of her child. To think that all her efforts to make him a decent citizen had led to this! Had he been with white boys or even alone—but why must he go out with colored boys? Asked why he had made friends of these boys in preference to more desirable whites, he said simply, "The white boys don't want to be friends with us colored bokies after school. Their mothers won't let them."

All this trouble took a toll of Annie's health, and after Bert and Tony had departed on their driving trip she became really ill.

But it also did the blacks some good. It showed that they were not allowed

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into the new clubrooms, the fact that they had looked in from outside the windows seemed to lend some pathos to the case. And one enterprising reporter made a special study of the Bennett family, giving pictures of the neat Bennett home and garden, of Tony playing his mouth-organ.

He wrote that Tony's sister was a brilliant pianist, while his young brother was a really promising artist. There was no mention of the white sister.

Dick Dorman had seen all this and knew quite well who the Bennetts were, and, as already mentioned, was somewhat perturbed as to whether or not he should pass the knowledge on to Isabel, but decided against it.

**H**OWEVER, Dick's conscience assailed him when he thought of Mrs. Bennett. With her trouble she might be wondering why Isabel had not written them even a line, and thinking her heartless and disloyal. So, when mailing her next letter, he mailed one from himself also, which ran:

"Dear Mrs. Bennett,

"You may be wondering why Isabel, your daughter, had not written to you in your recent trouble. I feel I must ease your mind by telling you that she is quite ignorant of the whole affair. It is not customary for schoolgirls to see the newspapers and I myself decided that no good could be served by telling her about it all. She is well and happy and very wrapped up in her studies."

I must explain that my cousin, Nancy Lamb, is her friend at the Hall and occasionally brings her home for a week-end. That is how I came to know Isabel, who has confided to me her whole story and gives me her letters to post. I can assure you Isabel does not forget her family."

Sincerely yours,

DICK DORMAN."

This letter, together with one from Isabel, put new life into Annie.

Dick's assertion that schoolgirls did not see newspapers was not entirely correct. They certainly were not issued to the students by the school authorities, but there were always some of the girls who liked to get hold of them whenever they could.

Isabel was not one of these and probably would have known nothing had it not been for one day when she was changing her shoes in the sports room. She turned her head a moment to listen when she caught the words "black boys."

"Wasn't it disgusting those three black boys getting off after killing a white man?" she heard Edwina Schick say in indignant tones.

"What was that?" she turned swiftly, her face alight with interest and alarm.

"Oh, some place up in the Northern Territory. Three black boys stole a motor-car and went joy-riding, ran into a white man on a motor-bike and killed him. And the rotten little beggars never even got a scratch."

"They should have been sent to a reformatory," broke in another of the group, "I'd teach the little wretches."

"Northern Territory!" Isabel sighed with relief. That was a long way away from anyone she knew... Not that it was at all likely that anyone she knew would be joy-riding at night—not if Mum knew it."

Cathy and Joan had now become friendly with the little half-caste girl Petal Purvis. The tragedy that involved both Tony and her brother drew

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them together again. Joan and she had made friends in their first days at school before Annie removed them from the harsh rule of Miss Grieve, but colored friends had not been encouraged by her mother.

Petal's mother had died, leaving her practically alone, and a young girl alone in Kangaroo Flat was something Annie could not bear to contemplate. She tossed aside her scruples and took Petal into her own home until she could find some suitable place of employment for her. Annie knew she had failed in her ambition of having her children accepted by the white people, but now, somehow, she did not care.

This was the breaking of the ice. Enthusiastically she began to teach this little colored girl all the secrets of homecraft.

No doubt her trouble over Tony had broken her resistance, but the thought of Isabel's wish to help them had turned her heart towards them, too. When Petal's friend, Nellie Adams, would drift in, Annie made her welcome. She took the two girls under her wing, spruced them up. When Mrs. Wally Condon was looking for help at her shearing, she recommended them, and felt quite a glow of pride in the improvement she had achieved.

When they came into town—about once a week—she encouraged them to come to her place, eager to keep them away from Kangaroo Flat, and Petal's brother Eddie, and Jimmy Brown, who were at Mr. Condon's farm, came along with them.

At Christmas she had a big party. Bert and Tony were home again and they had brought Hector with them. Now that Isabel had gone Bert felt that he should be free to visit them. Annie had no objection now she had haulled down her white flag. She was beaten, but she was making the best of her retreat. Off-white would be her color henceforth and she would do her best to raise its standard.

It was the merriest, gayest little party they had ever had. Bert was glowingly happy to be at home again, and the presence of five people of his own blood in Annie's home was so surprising that it set him thinking deeply.

He knew that it was not the sort of thing that Annie had wanted at the outset, and, looking at her he could not but feel that the change was synonymous with the change in herself. She had aged 10 years since he had been away.

BERT decided that Annie was fretting for Isabel. Their home had never been the same without her, and the thought entered his mind that it was not yet too late to reclaim her. They had not yet signed her away.

Mrs. Rochelle, on the other hand, was quite satisfied now that the girl had outgrown her humble origin, and there was a deep chasm between the smart and charming Isabel and her shameful connections. She would never go back to them again apparently she had never troubled herself about them at all.

She decided she would slip up to Wogina and get the papers signed before they went away. Mrs. Bennett had made no trouble to date, but you never knew.

Mrs. Rochelle had not consulted Mr. Steelman about this move, for he had made it plain that he was not at all pleased with this "eccentricity" of his wife's. It had been a complete surprise to him and he washed his hands of the whole affair.

Mrs. Steelman had seen the solicitor and had made the will on her own.

It seemed that she had a small property—long incorporated in Larabara—it had been her father's, and about £500 a year of her own. Isabel's bequest was to come out of this and the residue would go to the two boys.

Mrs. Rochelle was not altogether without self-interest in this matter. Although she really had grown fond and proud of Isabel, the girl would provide her with a nice, well-paid position for the next few years. Her term as principal of Lowdon Hall would end shortly and she would then have the trip to England as the girl's governess and guardian until she attained her majority.

Meanwhile, far away in Wogina Annie's Christmas party was in progress. Hector was playing dances on his banjo and the others dancing on the kitchen floor. Cathy danced with Paul both grave and serious. Tony and Petal were giggling away at some joke of their own, quite obvious to everyone else. Petal had a certain grace and attractiveness, and she was a nice, sensible girl. Annie felt if Tony must marry a colored girl, Petal was the best one she knew.

The big surprise to her was Joan and Jimmy Brown. They were in a corner by themselves and Joan was teaching him some steps.

Annie looked at Jimmy with new eyes. She had only regarded him at first as a poor boy-friend of Tony's who needed a little bit of home life on occasions. She could scarcely have told much about him, scarcely even thought of how he looked. Now she saw a sturdy, well-built lad, a caste darker than Joan. There was a strength and masculinity about him that made him something of a leader. Eddie, at least, had always followed him, and she had an idea that Tony did, too.

This had been brought out since his sojourn at Condon's. He was gaining confidence with knowledge and experience, and it was reflected in every line of his face and body. He had been something of a "tough guy" among the boys before, but the trust and kindness he enjoyed had changed him to a normal, amiable boy. She knew that Condon was pleased with him,

So this was the shape of things to come? Her children, rejected by the whites, were reverting to their darker side. Somehow she knew that she had been facing that probability for a long time.

A few days after the party Annie had a letter from Isabel. She was going for a trip with twenty of her school-friends. They would tour Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland as far as the Barrier Reef, returning at the end of February. They would be chaperoned by Mrs. Rochelle. She sent a snap of herself stepping into a plane, looking very beautiful in a tailored suit.

Annie felt that Isabel was very far away from them now; she had soared, and they had sunk. If Isabel had stayed with them, she wondered, would it have made any difference?

Yes, had she stayed and married Lennie Shepherd she felt that it would have. But what was the use of thinking that; Isabel, she knew now, would never, never have married Lennie.

The trip was a great excitement to Isabel. Most of the girls were experienced travelers and looked with amusement on her ecstasies. She cared nothing about this. She felt her soul expanding with the wide hori-

sons, awed and exhilarated by the huge buildings; the clamor, the hurry and progress that she saw everywhere.

When they arrived in Melbourne, with its roaring traffic and its well-planned streets Isabel found it hard to realize that it had once been wild, untamed bush, the happy hunting-ground of the blacks.

How completely they had been routed! Not one aboriginal or half-caste face did she ever see, although she scanned the crowds.

But she was greatly heartened by an exhibition of paintings that was exciting much attention, not alone for the beauty of the work, but because the artists were full-blooded aborigines.

Isabel was deeply stirred, and her old desire to champion the blacks returned. She thought of Paul and his sketches, of Cathy and her music. Undoubtedly they had talent, she told herself, if they only had chance such as this to bring it out and show what they could do.

SOME people, Isabel found, realized that the aborigines were real people with souls and rights. She might have plunged right into the problem there and then, but the presence of Mrs. Rochelle made it impossible. She remembered she had contracted to forget the black people, to renounce their cause. She realized she was no longer entirely free; she was bound to carry out the terms of her contract.

At a dance one night, given in their honor, she was delighted to see Dick Dorman, looking handsome and tanned and joyful. He danced several dances with Isabel, and taking some cool drinks they found a seat on the verandah.

"Well, what do you think of Melbourne?" he asked.

"Oh, I think it's wonderful."

"Do you like it better than Perth?"

"No, no. It's too big. I don't know that I should like to live here. Perth is so much more Australian, so much more our own. Melbourne is more sophisticated. You don't see many half-castes or aborigines here."

He looked at her quickly. "You still feel for the blacks, don't you, Isabel?" he said gently.

"Yea, I do . . . Oh, I do . . . They've had a rotten deal, and I've been in a position to know all about it . . . I was going to help them once, to stand up for them, but all I've done is to go away and leave them—to repudiate my family because they're half black . . . Don't you despise me?"

He took her hand. "No," he said, "very far from that. You will be able to help them, Isabel, when you've finished your education. That's what you left them for, isn't it, to get an education?"

She stood still and thought a moment before she answered. The breeze blew little tendrils about her face. Her deep blue eyes looked intently into his as she said:

"There's something about you, Dick, that makes me tell the truth. I'm always making a father confessor of you, aren't I?" and she laughed.

"Hey, cut out the father business," Dick expostulated. "I don't feel that way about you at all. What I feel for you is more like this." And putting his arm around her he stooped and kissed her lips.

"Oh, Dick," she said a little breathlessly. "You should have waited till I confessed before you did that."

"Well, let's have it."

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"Mrs. Steelman left me that money because Baden and I were in love. She knew Mr. Steelman would object to his marrying a poor nobody so she left the money for me to be educated. She wanted me to be a wife fit for her son. And that's why I took it. I wanted to marry Baden; I never had given up my people for any other reason."

He said nothing for a few moments but stood looking at the trees in the dark garden. Then he turned his gaze on her and said "You are in love with him?"

She puckered her brow. "I was but now, somehow. I'm not so sure. I did promise to wait for him. But he's changed. I could feel it in his letters even before they hinted the title."

"The title?" Dick looked at her in surprise.

"Oh yes. Didn't you know? His father has inherited a baronetcy—quite unexpectedly. A distant cousin that he hardly knew died suddenly and so Mr. Steelman is now Sir John, and Baden's the heir apparent."

"And how does Baden react to that?"

"Well, to tell the truth, he hasn't written since. It was Mrs. Rochele who told me. But of course it will put him out of my reach. Imagine a Sir marrying a girl with aboriginal connections!"

"Does he mind? The color question, I mean."

"He didn't, but his father does, very much, and Baden's very loyal to his family."

"Jim. Probably if you married him he'd stay in England and never come back here. And that way you really would be giving up your people."

**S**ILENCE fell between them, then. "I'm going to England, anyway," Isobel said. "in April. It's all arranged."

He started. "April," he exclaimed. "That's not far off."

"No, it isn't," she agreed.

"Isobel!" He grasped her by the elbow and drew her towards him. "Don't go," he urged. "Somehow, I don't think you'll be very happy."

She looked at him in surprise. "Oh but I couldn't give it up now," she said. "Of course, no papers are signed yet, but I could hardly go back on my decision after all this time. And how could I face going back to Wogina a failure?"

"You needn't go back there," he said. "I didn't mean that. You could get some sort of a job in the city. I'll see Dad about getting you a job in his office. Then you could go home and see your mother occasionally. And next year, darling—"

"Oh, there you are," said a clear voice as Nancy Lamb came out on the verandah. "Slipper's being served, you two. You've been talking for ages."

That night Dick could not go to sleep, and he could not help a slight feeling of relief that Nancy had interrupted them before he had uttered fatal words—words that he knew were better left unsaid.

Isobel, his friend and protege, his "angel in the tree," had charmed and pleased him, but she had been to him nothing more than a "sweet little kid." His visit to Melbourne had only happened to coincide with hers. It was his vacation, too, and his father, who was the proprietor of a large engineering firm in Perth, had sent him to look over a new patent that he thought of installing in his shops.

Knowing that the girls from Lowdon

Hall were in town, he had looked them up at once, and at the dance Isobel had almost taken his breath away with her beauty. He realized now that she was a girl no longer, but a young woman. Her loveliness was irresistible, and she had acquired the poise and confidence of a girl with a distinguished background. Impossible to believe she was the little girl in the willow-tree. He smiled at the recollection.

Commonsense told him that he was only 20 and had another year to go before he would obtain his degree and join his father's firm. Marriage, he had considered, snipped a fellow's wings and he hadn't meant to think of it till he was at least thirty, and yet here he was considering it at twenty. No doubt he was mad.

And there was her background. He was far from being a nob, and as far as he went himself he wouldn't have minded at all the fact that Isobel had dusky relatives, but there was his family, and his family was more sacred to Dick than anything on earth.

He thought of his father, the "grand old man" of the firm, a leading citizen and councillor. He knew that he looked to him to follow in his footsteps and uphold the family traditions. Of course, Dad would stand by him in anything he did, he could be tolerant and loyal, but that made it harder to strike the blow that he knew it would be if he married into Isobel's family.

And his mother sweet and loving, with her prim and conventional ideas concerning it over her committees and her church. Was he going to subject her to the petty embarrassments and gossip she would encounter if he took this step? Jeanie, too, his newly married sister, one of society's smartest young matrons.

Isobel would not be likely to ignore her people. What was to prevent her, in the kindness of her heart, having sisters and brothers down to stay with her? And he could just imagine the talk that would create among their friends.

And, too, there was that desire of Isobel's to work for the advancement of the colored people and her great sympathy with them. Nothing wrong with that in the abstract, of course, but when it came home to yourself—

No, the more he thought about it the more he realized that it would not do. He must put marriage right out of his head. He could still be friendly with her, of course, but he must be careful to see that it went no further. After this trip she would possibly be leaving school or going to England, and he wouldn't be seeing her again.

So he went to sleep with his mind firmly made up and quite confident in his own strength to withstand the sweet temptation.

But Isobel and Dick did not meet again in Melbourne, because Dick left the following morning, at his father's request, to see to some business in Broken Hill.

That evening the girls left for Sydney.

Isobel found plenty to think about as the train travelled swiftly through the night. Was she in love with Dick? Well, very nearly so, she thought. She had enjoyed his kiss, she loved to be with him. He was such a comfortable, comforting person, she could tell him anything, and she felt sure that, but for Nancy's abrupt entrance, he would have proposed to her.

He would make a fine husband, and had things been different she would have had no hesitation about accepting him. But there was Baden. She could never get over the feeling that she belonged to him. They had been so

very close in their childhood and although the years he had been her ideal her hero.

Was it since the advent of Dick she asked herself that his image had grown fainter with her? She considered the question calmly, and at last was quite satisfied that it was not so.

In her lonely and uncongenial after-school days at Wogina she had felt a sense of loss and homesickness about him. Then with his mother's legacy her hopes had leapt again—but Baden seemed to come no closer to her, and Dick, coming into her life then, had given her heart a new interest.

Had there been no Baden before him—but there had, and the image of Baden was too strong to be easily effaced. She would not commit herself to anyone until she went to England and saw for herself how she stood with him.

But even if he didn't want her—and she was able to contemplate quite calmly the possibility—she knew now that there would be others who would.

But, of course, the Dornmans were big people in Perth; they probably would not be any prouder of black relations than the Steelmans, though they might be nicer about it. Yes, whatever Dick might ask her when she saw him, she would say "no." She would go to England.

The next time they met it was at the end of her holiday. He was waiting for her on the Perth railway station with bad news. He had had a wire from her mother asking him to tell Isobel that her father had met with a serious accident.

Isobel's face went white as she asked him what had happened?

He was able to tell her, because there was a report of it in the morning's paper.

"Man Loses Leg in Trucking Accident," it said, and went on to describe how, in the dusk at the Wogina trucking yards, two bogies had broken away from a shunting engine and careered along the line towards the yards, where some men were trucking sheep. In the dusk the bogies were not seen until too late and a drover named Albert Bennett had been thrown under the wheels. It was feared he would lose both legs.

"When is there a train?" she asked faintly after she had read the report.

"There is no train to Wogina till tonight," answered Dick, "but I'll run you up in car in a few hours. When would you be ready to start?"

**T**HE panic and unhappiness she found at home shocked Isobel. Only the four children were there, with Kate McCubbin kindly looking after them. They were wild-eyed with anxiety and grief, living only to run at intervals to the telephone booth at the post office to get further news of their father.

Annie was with him at Mullewa, where he was in hospital. One leg had already been amputated and the doctor was fighting to save the other, and at the same time fighting desperately to save his patient's life.

Cliff Wilson, Wally Condon, Mr. Harrison and Mr. Shepherd had all been present in their offers of help; other townspeople, too—some who had scorned them hitherto—now found their hearts melted with sympathy. This little family did seem to meet with misfortune.

One and all continued some way of showing sympathy; there was simply an avalanche of cakes at the Bennett

## ROSE IN A DUSKY GARDEN

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home fruit, vegetables, and even from some of the country folk legs of mutton, eggs, chickens and even a couple of turkeys.

Mrs McCubbin, in her practical way, was making provision for the preservation of the latter and had asked—no, demanded—cold storage space from the hotelkeeper, the butcher, and the fruiterer. There was enough meat she said, to feed the family for a month.

Dick Dorman had hardly landed his passenger at her home when she immediately took charge of everything in a manner that amazed him . . . He saw a calm, young woman who comforted and admonished her sisters and brothers and consoled with Mrs McCubbin as woman to woman. They arrived at noon and Mrs. McCubbin had lunch ready. Dick was to drive horses across to Mullewa immediately they had eaten.

Now he could realise what this girl meant to her family. Her very presence seemed to ease the pain of these children and bring peace and hope to them; it was as if she emanated these things from her very person. And she seemed so much at home, so happy with them.

### J

UST before the meal ended, a young man of sturdy build and rugged looks came in unceremoniously. His clothes were of the best make but worn carelessly. One look at his face when he saw Isabel told Dick that he was not her only admirer.

"Gee, Iso, it's good to see yer," he cried as he wrung her hand. All the colleagues in the world were not going to make any difference to Len Shepherd's grammar and accent.

"We was wonderin' whether you'd come up, an' I sez 'yer can bank on Iso, she'll come." He ran yet across Iso. "Ain't got another thing to do."

Isabel smiled gratefully at him. "That's good of you, Len," she said. "It will save Dick an extra trip and I know he wants to get back to town tonight."

She had slipped back into her pattern and Len was part of it, thought Dick, a trifle enviously. He felt himself dismasted. He was a foreigner, miles away from her now. He was just as much an incidental to her, he felt, as the car she had travelled in.

But at parting she squeezed his hand and looked deep into his eyes. "Thank you for everything, Dick," she said. "You've been simply marvellous to me from the moment I met you. I'll never be able to thank you half enough."

"It's been wonderful to know you, Isabel," he said in his sincere way. "Let me know when you return to Perth. I must see you before you leave for England."

She started as if coming out of a trance. "England?" she repeated dazedly. "Yes, England! . . . Yes, Dick, I'll let you know."

It was with a heavy heart and a sense of loss that he turned away. She had reverted to her own world again; she had forgotten him already. And he had so nearly had her. Why hadn't he had the courage to speak again today, to burn his boats?

Now he would go back to his humdrum life and in due course would marry some nice, unexciting girl in his own class, one who would do everything according to schedule. It was what he had decided to do, but he could not stifle a certain amount of sarcasm and the empty realisation that he had allowed something splendid and vital to evade his grasp.

Back in the house Isabel faced her problems. She had comforted the children and they seemed much better—all except Tony, whose eyes were tortured, his face haggard and ghastly. Affectionate he had always been, she knew, but volatile and prone to take trouble lightly. This seemed a new Tony to her.

She followed him down to the stable when he went to water the horses and found him with his head on his arm dejected.

"Tony, why are you like this?" she said. "You must not give way so. Chin up, boy, you've got to be the man of the house now till Dad's about again."

He groaned. "Don't, Iso," he said, "you don't know what I've done . . . I guess you won't want to speak to me when you know . . . We're broke, Iso, broke to the wide, and it's all my fault."

All the way over to Mullewa—there was no train service between Wagga and Mullewa—while Len prattled about the district news, Isabel's mind was busy with this new problem. She paid little heed to Len, just enough to be able to say "Yes" and "No" in the right places, thankful that he seemed to require no conversation from her. It was enough for Len to be able to talk.

This story of Tony's was like a bombshell, she could hardly believe it. Surely he had been exaggerating. Then she remembered the conversation in the sports room at Lowdow Hall, the three bigger boys who had got off scot-free after killing a white man. One of them, at least, had not.

She had managed to get a few words alone with Mrs. McCubbin and found that his story was only too true. The kindly woman had given her the facts bluntly. Tony's tragedy had taken every penny the Bennetts had and left them in debt, while it put a mortgage on their home as well. Annie had never fully regained her strength, and now this dreadful accident.

Mrs. McCubbin was sure that Bert was not insured against accident, and as he was working for himself he could not sue his employer. From what she had heard about the accident she was afraid there would be no hope of compensation from the railway company, but Mr. Wilson was going into that and would do what was necessary in that direction.

"See that crop there, no good this year," Len's voice broke into her thoughts. "It's ole Ned Mallory's. Et it of, 'e did. Ain't been a good year in these parts at all. Didn't affect us much, though. Dad always manages to get a crop, regular wizard he is at croppin'. Believe they're havin' no end of a bad spin on Laravilla."

"Oh!" She came out of her absorption and pricked up her ears.

"Yair. This manager bloke they've got there, 'e ain't much good. I suppose you know McCubbin's left 'em. After all these years . . . Yair. Mac an' Davis come to grips . . . Musta been pretty bad when Mac couldn't go on."

"They tell me there's dead sheep all over the place, an' bullocks, too. Shame, ain't it, to see a good place like that go to rot."

Isabel agreed and wondered silently how the family were fixed for money. Was Laravilla their sole source of income? She had always been under the impression that Mr. Steerman was a wealthy man apart from that, but, of course, she did not know.

"I wonder," Len was saying now, "whether your dad will be able to

ride again, Iso. Suppose he'll get a wooden leg. A man could ride with that long as his horse was quiet; mountin' an' dismountin' would be the worst trouble, but once on the horse he'd be all right. I wouldn't mind bettin' he'll be back on his old job before too long. They're pretty tough them abos, y'know."

No dietary about Len but Isabel was past minding such a trifles. She was thinking about Tony's confession and their financial straits again. Dad would probably be in hospital for weeks—months even—and expenses piling up all the time. Meanwhile, the family had to live.

Len, as though he sensed her thoughts, was saying, "Of course, if your dad don't go on the road again young Tony could always get a job at our place. Good kid, Tony, an' awful smart with horses. Not that many's botherin' with horses nowadays, but he's good with the motor, too . . . That turn-up on the road was as much Rogers' fault as theirs for ridin' without a light. Lookin' for it, I was. Your dad had no right to pay 'em anythin' considerin'."

Yes, Tony could get a job, all right, but he could only earn a boy's wages and that would just about keep himself . . . The twins were fifteen; could they get light jobs in the town sufficient to keep themselves and help a little?

Paul was just thirteen, and Mum had planned to send him away to college since he was so studious inclined and so wrapped up in drawing. She wished they could do it; she felt that he deserved such a chance, especially when she thought of Albert Matamata.

At Mullewa the overworked matron fairly gasped when an apparition that might have stepped out of a fashion magazine announced that she was "Mr. Bennett's daughter" (Bert was "Bennett the half-caste" to matron) "and could I see him, please?"

"I'm afraid not today," she answered as she ran her eye over the tall, thin lines of Isabel's grey suit. "He's much too ill and tired—tomorrow, possibly . . . But your mother is here, sitting out on the back verandah."

**W**HEN Isabel found her mother, she had to look twice to recognise in this slumped-up, dejected figure with the lined and listless face and the crumpled frock, the starched and sparkling matron she had left behind two years before.

"Mum," she cried, and Anne looked up, startled, then, "Isabel! Oh, my darling! Isay, Isay! You've come back. You've come back."

And then she was in her daughter's arms and Isabel was rocking her like a frightened, weary child while she cried her heart out on her shoulder.

"I thought you'd left us for ever . . . I'd given up all hope of ever seeing you again," she said between sobs.

"There, there, Mum . . . Steady up now . . . Where are you staying? The boarding house? Do you think I could stay there, too, tonight?"

"I'm sure you could, darling. Mrs. Payden is awfully kind. Oh, dear, you've no idea what a comfort you'll be to me. I'm afraid I've gone to pieces lately."

"Well, it's not surprising, is it . . . Now you relax and I'll look after everything. We can't see Dad today, so let's go to the boarding house. Len will run us up. He's waiting outside."

"Len? Ah-h-h. He's been so good, Isabel. A real friend."

"He followed Isabel like an obedient child.

## ROSE IN A DUSKY GARDEN

Supplement to The Australian Women's Weekly—August 20 1954

"Whatever's happened to Mother?" Isobel asked Dr. Dunn next day. "She's not the same person I hardly knew here. Is she all right, Doctor?"

He pursed his lips. "She's far from well," he said. "This time in her life she needs tranquillity, freedom from worry, and for the past two years she's had nothing but trouble. This one I'm afraid has rather shattered her, and she'll need to be taken care of for some considerable time, or the consequences might be serious."

This fell on Isobel like a warning, which she felt it was meant to be. And she had winced at his words: "for the past two years she's had nothing but trouble". Yes, I dealt the first blow she thought. I started her unhappiness. It's up to me now to make amends.

"We're going home, Mum," she announced later that day. "We can't do anything for Dad yet, and it's not doing you any good hanging about here. It's more comfortable at home and less expensive. We can come and see him as often as we like because Len will drive us over."

They allowed Isobel a few minutes with her dad before she left, and it tore her heart to see him looking so drawn and pale. Then he opened his eyes, and with recognition, a wonderful light spread over his face and he smiled.

"Isso," he said, and his voice was only a whisper. "Why—how—when—" He struggled to say something more, but Isobel put her finger on his lips and silenced him.

"It's all right, Dad," she said, her face close to his. "Don't you worry about anything but getting well. I'll look after the family."

He smiled happily, but his eyes closed wearily and she knew that it was time to go. At the door she looked back. His eyes were closed, but the smile was still there.

"Doctor," she broke into the surgery, the pent-up tears rolling down her cheeks. "Dad—is he—will he—"

He shook his head. "I wouldn't like to predict anything at this stage," he said, "but your father is a tough, hardy man, and has always led a healthy life. He will put up a good fight, I feel sure, and I am quite satisfied with his condition so far. But you must know this, I think he will certainly have to lose his other foot, and that will mean he'll never work again."

This was something that Isobel had already realised, so she just nodded gravely. "Poor old Dad," she said, "he won't like that, but if he only gets well again I guess he'll make the best of it. He'll miss the bush though, he almost seems a part of it."

**O**n the journey back home that evening Isobel was very quiet. But only outwardly. Inwardly she was in a tumult of mixed emotions and loyalties; of hopes and dreams that would rise up and press their claims against all this sea of worry and unhappiness that sought to claim her. The condition of both her mother and her father and the financial outlook of the family had been a blow—a blow that had struck at her warm, affectionate heart and called out all her love and loyalty towards them.

But there the other side called her, too. The climax of her wonderful, fairy-tale legacy had been the journey to England and all that it implied. It had seemed to hold like a beacon through her "foolish days". She might have faltered and gone back to her people but for the thoughts of it—and it meant Baden. At least she would have seen

num and learnt how he felt about her.

But even without Baden at the end of it she had longed for the wonderful adventure.

The shock of her homecoming had obliterated her ambitions for the time but they were there, waiting their chance to make their claims on her determination, on her future. She felt their temptation most keenly.

What was there for her in this wretched little place? Bert would be the first to tell her to go and take the good things that had been offered to her. Her mother too, if she were in her right mind, would want to see her up among the great ones of the world. Surely, surely they could battle along without her.

But Isobel knew only too well they could not. Had they been an all white family, yes. Everyone would be rushing to help them, and the children themselves would have a confidence that alas, handicapped as they were, they had never had. People now were sorry for them; they were kind up to a point. But there it stopped. No one was going to take them by the hand and help them along.

That was her job. The rich gifts of beauty and personality and vitality that had seemed destined to earn her a place in the world of fame, must now be used to help them.

But perhaps in a month or two, when Dad was getting better and Mum had recovered her strength and Tony and the girls were in jobs... maybe then they could go.

When they reached home, what was her surprise to find it full of visitors.

There were Petal, and Nellie Adams, and Nellie's little sister, and two dark-faced boys, one of whom, they told her, was Petal's brother, while the others—they called him Jimmy—seemed to be the leader of the little band.

It did not escape her that Joan was very animated and happy among them, also that Tony had dropped much of his gloom and was basking in the presence of his friends. Even Paul, quiet as usual, watched them all with a pleased and friendly look in his eyes, as though he were among real friends. Cathy was in the parlor, practising.

It stabbed her heart a little, because she knew that it was what her mother had fought against so hard, and this sign of her surrender showed only that she had given up the fight—had lost her will.

Thinking of it in her bed that night, she could not but realise that the children must have friends. Her mother had told her of Cathy's vocation, and she was pleased at this solution of a difficult problem. Cathy seemed made for a convent.

But Joan was different. She was of the world; vibrant and eager for life, she would get it where she could. The whites rejected her, so she turned to the dark races. She had seen the looks that passed between her and the big, lumbering Jimmy. It was only half-love; everyone had half-love, but she must scratch it before it became serious. Her lovely little Joan was far too good for him. She knew her white world now knew how it despised the dark race; but Joan was three quarters white. She must not be allowed to lose her hold on the white race.

Suppose she did go to England, and Mum who had failed so much, should die, what would become of the youngsters?

She had a horrified vision of them living in the native quarter of Kangaroo Flat. Yes, how could they help it? They would naturally go where they were welcome.

The force of these thoughts had pulled her up into a sitting posture,

and she gazed out through the window at the darkened garden, able to discern in the starlight the outlines of the trees and the small house across the road. She had never thought it a small house in the old days she had thought it a very handsome place indeed, with its latticed-in verandah and its pretentious portico.

But her vision had expanded greatly since then. She realised with a shudder that it was due to shrink again.

She would have to grow small-town and insular England! For an instant her heart gave one despairing cry as all the lovely dreams rushed through her mind again. But only for an instant did she let it sway her.

She knew that England was not for her. That fate had decided against it. She had known it tonight when, as she tucked her mother into bed, Annie had told her the true story of her parentage, and how Bert had saved them and succored them so long ago.

**T**HIS final shock, on top of so many, could hardly make much difference to Isobel, but there had been a mortal hurt in it to her pride. And she had been suddenly humiliated by the thought that while she had loved her sisters and brothers, she had felt the superiority of her white blood. And all the while the children were legitimate, while she was not.

Oh, it was too ludicrous that she Isobel Bennett, illegitimate child, fathered by a half-caste, should have set herself up to be one of the aristocracy, should have cut herself off from the very man who had given her the right to a name.

Fate had very properly put her into her place... Her place was here, and her job—to look after Mum and Dad and the kids. She must forget England and Lowdon Hall and—and Baden and all such dreams.

She was a very humble person now and she knew the fight that lay before her was a grim one. A little shudder passed through her as the chill of dawn struck her bare shoulders.

Then a cock crowed in a nearby yard and another, far off, answered him, while a streak of light seemed to strike the pane. It was dawn. Down in the main street a car started up, got noiselessly into gear. Its sound had scarcely died away when a horse cantered steadily down the road and a dog barked. All homely sounds, friendly, at this eerie hour. They seemed to warn her, give her the feeling of being at home again.

After all, it was good to be here, with her loved ones. It was warming to think that she was so necessary to them. And one thing—she had shed that old bogey, the shame of having betrayed her people.

She was free now, free as air. Yes, she had been granted a reprieve, a second chance. And she'd find plenty of adventure battling for her dear family... It was going to be fun.

"Little Wogina, here I come," she murmured to the coming day. Then, with the old rough smile on her face, she nestled into her blankets and slept.

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# • • SMALL OR SHADY

● The yellow straw platter (right), worn tilted straight forward on the head, is dripping with ripe red cherries and green leaves.

● A tiny, shallow pillbox (extreme right) in smooth violet-blue straw, belted round its narrow edge with stiffened white pique, perches dead straight on top of the head.



● A charmer in fine pink straw (above) swathed with rose-red chiffon. Becoming to wear, with a comfortable crown that fits on to your head and a deep, shady brim to protect your complexion on hot summer days.

● Pillbox of yellow chiffon (right). The chiffon is wound round in a roll to end in a hand-made silk and chiffon rose posed right over the face.

● Dior winds ice-blue chiffon into a bonnet turban (above), completely covering the hair, and finishes it off with a great draped chiffon rose on one side. A perfect little theatre or cocktail party hat.



# BOOK REVIEWS

**By HELEN GORDON**

she carries little conviction when she tries to write in the first person as a man.

As a result, "Case" is merely a slickly told murder and mystery story, peopled by some rather conventional stock characters. It could have been something much better.

*Our copy from the publishers.*

\* \* \*

NAJMEH NAJAFI, co-author with Helen Hinckley of "Persia Is My Heart," is not yet 25, yet she has seen enough of people and events to feel justified in writing her autobiography.

Those who read "Persia Is My Heart" will feel that she is justified, too, for what Najmeh may lack in sophistication and worldly experience is more than compensated for by her warmth and sincerity as she recounts the incidents of her childhood and paints at the same time vivid picture of contemporary Persia and its people.

Within her short life, Najmeh, the sheltered child of a great Persian family, has seen Persia pass from ancient to modern times.

She describes the wedding feasts, the New Year celebrations ushering in the spring, her Moslem religion, and her family with an engaging simplicity.

But for all that, Najmeh is no mere entertainer. Her own instinctive curiosity led her, still in her early teens, to note and wonder at the poverty of

the Persian villages, and to search for a remedy.

She saved money, learned sewing and dress designing, and after borrowing substantially from her family set herself up in business as the proprietor of a fashionable dress shop.

With her profits and the sale of the business she went to America to study economics, sociology, business methods, and factory management with the object of establishing small

tion of the hero seeking revenge on the son of his father's murderer.

The novel opens in Hamburg, where Julius Sale, a young Scottish landowner, is studying law with the express purpose of using legal means to take from Martin Devereux his estate and possessions. Devereux is the son of the supposed murderer of Sale, senior.

The supernatural element

over the moral aspects of his planned revenge.

This unequal struggle continues for one hundred pages or so, but, in the end, the Baron and his minions are vanquished and Julius' better nature triumphs.

*Our copy from the publishers, Hutchinson & Company.*

\* \* \*

THERE is a quaint, slightly Dickensian flavor about Francesca Marton's "Mrs. Betsey," a novel set in the Victorian era, published by Hamish Hamilton.

Mrs. Betsey in the central figure in "Attic and Acre," Miss Marton's earlier novel of life "below stairs" in Victoria's England. We see her now, somewhat older, plump, and comely as ever, a bankrupt innkeeper's widow seeking employment as housekeeper to a decrepit county gentleman.

In her bustling, practical way, Betsey soon sets things to rights—in a thoroughly "Pollyanna" fashion.

Disaster threatens occasionally, but the Betseys of literature have their quiet triumph at the end.

If you're an addict of Victoria you'll find this book completely worthwhile. Francesca Marton paints a particularly vivid picture of the period, redolent of London fog, cosy inns, solid food, and the excitement of the Great Exhibition.

*Our copy from the publishers.*



A MIDDLE-AGED man returns to the scene of his school days and in his mind's eye relives some of his boyhood experiences. This is the theme of Hugh McGraw's "Rough Island Story."

McGraw knows boys, I think, for, although the novel's childhood vignettes occasionally read like snatches of the "Boys' Own Annual," the youngsters themselves are consistently believable and always entertaining.

James Fitzsimmons, the hero and narrator of "Rough Island Story," must have had a much more eventful childhood than most of us. The reader learns in flashback how the young James and two friends explored an island in a privately owned artificial lake in the grounds of an empty house.

There James met a strange little girl called Miranda, who had been kidnapped by her mother's chauffeur and personal maid. James and his friends foiled Miranda's kidnappers.

The plot is wildly far-fetched, but the people—James' family, their maid, James' schoolmates—and the smaller incidents, such as the tree-climbing episode, are completely worthwhile.

*Our copy from the publishers, Arthur Barker Ltd.*



factories in Persia's rural areas.

At date of publication she was still in America, studying for her university degree.

*Our copy from the publishers, Victor Gollancz Ltd.*

\* \* \*

MARJORIE BOWEN'S last novel, "The Man with the Scales," is a rather uneasy mixture of straight-out historical romance and vague allegory.

On the historical side we have the fairly standard situa-

tions in the form of three people. They are Baron Kiss, described as a Hungarian aristocrat who is rather like the "Wandering Jew," "The Man with the Scales" himself (he is a penniless professor of botany), and his sinisterly beautiful daughter Amalia.

These three mysterious figures involve themselves in Julius' affairs, appearing and disappearing in a bewildering way, uttering cryptic remarks and precipitating Julius into a struggle with his conscience

anna" fashion.

Disaster threatens occasionally, but the Betseys of literature have their quiet triumph at the end.

If you're an addict of Victoria you'll find this book completely worthwhile. Francesca Marton paints a particularly vivid picture of the period, redolent of London fog, cosy inns, solid food, and the excitement of the Great Exhibition.

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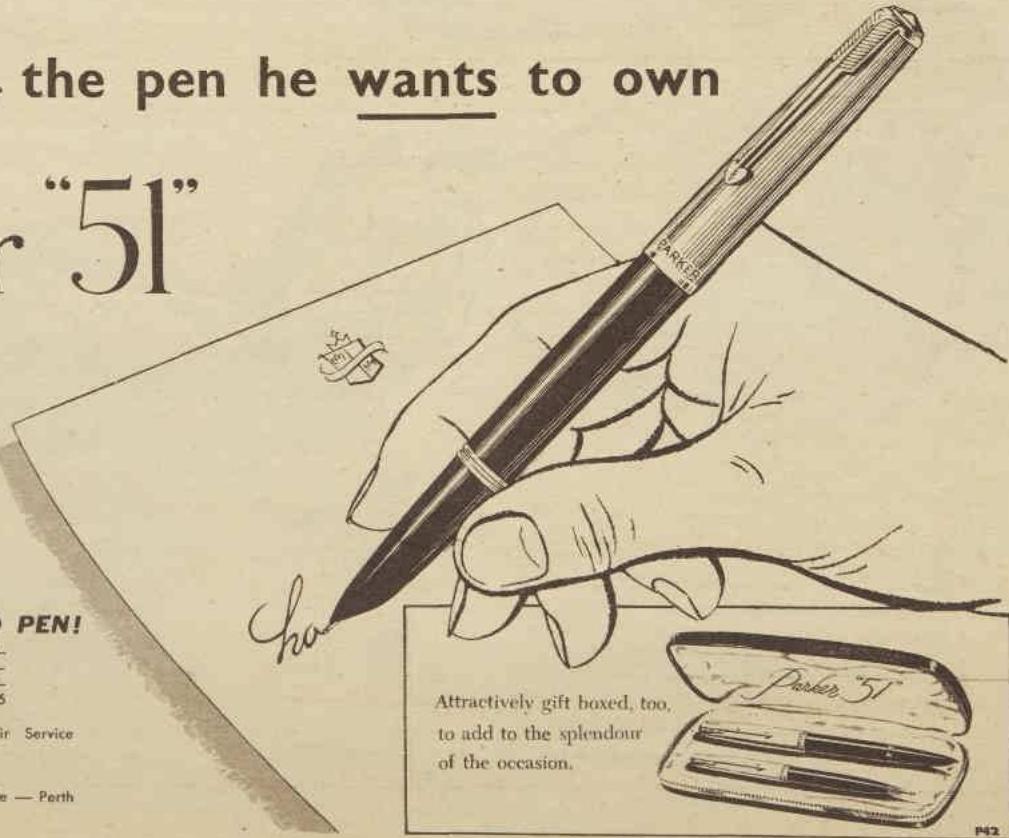
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# England's most popular crispbread now made here!

new low price

# RYVITA



CRISP RYE BREAD



## So appetising!

The crisp bread that's better for you!

### Makes you fit—keeps you slim

Because Ryvita is so appetizing and fills a long-wanted need in our daily diet—there has never been enough in Australia to go 'round! But now, this BIG crunchy, wholemeal crispbread is in full supply—and at a new low price!

#### WHAT IS RYVITA?

Ryvita is a light sustaining crispbread made from the whole rye grain. It should be eaten just like bread—but there the likeness stops!... Every crunchy Ryvita gives you Carbohydrates for quick energy, Vitamin D to build strong bones

and sound teeth, Vitamin B for good digestion, Proteins to build firm muscles, Minerals for sturdy growth, and roughage to help your system function naturally. Enjoyed regularly, Ryvita makes you fit—keeps you slim.

#### MAKES OTHER FOODS TASTE NICER!

Make Ryvita your family daily bread. You'll love its distinctive taste—and you'll really enjoy the way it brings out the *true* flavour of everything you eat with it. Buy your Ryvita tomorrow from your nearest grocer. On sale now. Family size pound packet, 3/6. (Slightly higher in country areas).



RYVITA  
for breakfast

Enjoy crisp Ryvita for breakfast with your marmalade or honey. See how much better you'll feel. No heavy "after" feeling. Yet, Ryvita is so very sustaining!



RYVITA  
for lunch

Combine good eating with good health. Enjoy Ryvita with butter, cheese, honey, Vegemite—or any of those other spreads you like so much. So appetizing! And so digestible!



RYVITA  
after school

Children need a snack after school—but why spoil their evening meal? Give them crisp, light Ryvita with any favourite spreads—for quick energy and good health.

#### FREE 33-PAGE BOOKLET! "Slimming to Fashion"

This booklet features photographs of the new Fashions by Paquin, Jacques Heim and Jean Desès—direct from Paris... and 12 easy-to-follow reducing exercises. Fill in this coupon (BLOCK letters, please) and enclose self-addressed, stamped envelope and mail to Dept. X, Ryvita, 4 Lyons Road, Camperdown, N.S.W.

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# RYVITA

*makes you fit—keeps you slim*



LANA TURNER  
star of M.G.M. film  
"BETRAYED"...  
in colour

*Lana Turner*  
**TELLS YOU HOW TO MAKE YOUR LEGS LOOK LOVELIER.**

"Today," says Lana Turner, "smart-looking, appearance-conscious women dress from the legs up."

**HILTON** NYLOSEAL NYLONS—sheer, soft and dull in finish—help make lovely clothes look even lovelier.

You'll agree, when you wear **HILTON**, that they are the most flattering Nylons you've ever worn.

By actual test, you'll find **HILTON** NYLOSEAL NYLONS look lovelier and last longer.

*Elation* 15 Denier — **14'6**  
your choice for sheerer nylons.

30 Denier . . . *Wally Dream* . . . 12/6  
15 Denier Mesh . . . *Fanfare* . . . 17/11  
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**HILTON**  
*Nyloseal*  
**NYLONS**

**MORE WOMEN WEAR HILTON**

KAY MELAUN SAYS . . .

## Here's your answer

Do you remember the young man — W.B., of Burwood, N.S.W. — who wrote to this page some weeks ago lamenting that since he didn't have a car he didn't have a chance of dates with "nice, middle-class girls"?

He wrote, he said, on his own behalf and on behalf of car-less men friends who were in the same date-less plight.

I thought his letter and complaints were reasonable enough. But the average female reaction was one great sniff of indignation.

This letter was typical: "What's wrong with these boys, besides the fact that they haven't a car? Admittedly, it's much nicer riding in a car than running to catch a train or bus, but girls are not so hard that they would toss a decent boy aside just because he can't afford a car."

"Is it the boys' manners, their overbearing self-pity, or just plain stupidity that makes them like this?"

"I've been going with boys for over three years and in all that time only one has ever owned a car, but I still had fun."

"Wake up, fellows. It's not your lack of a car that's your main trouble; it's you!"

J. S. S., Fairfield, Victoria.

CHEER up, W.B., don't let this get you down. There may be some truth in what the lady says. You might be a bit sorry for yourself — who isn't? — but I don't think you're stupid or bad mannered.

To the end of my days I'll insist that there are plenty of girls who would "toss a decent boy aside just because he can't afford a car." Not only do the tossing, but never think twice about it.

Let's give the last word on the subject to R.V., of Blacktown, N.S.W. She says:

"The girls he knows must be those who judge a man by what he has instead of what he is. Maybe he'd be wise to move from Burwood and see what the country girls are like. They're used to walking."

IF you've heard Edith Piaf singing "Les Trois Cloches" (The Three Bells) — you may recall the male voice background which contributes so much to the disc. They're called Les Compagnons de la Chanson and there are, I think, nine voices. They now have a disc to themselves (DO3652) on which they sing in French "Je Crois En Toi" (which you'll recognise as "I Believe") and "Quelque Part, Deux Amants." The harmony of these fine singers is really something to hear.

THOSE of you who collect tenor recordings won't need telling that Giuseppe di Stefano has one of the "big" voices among the newer singers. His reputation will

"A nurse in a small country hospital, I have recently become engaged to a young man whose sister, unfortunately or otherwise, is the matron of the hospital. Do you think I should leave and obtain employment elsewhere, or should I ignore the fact? Also she sits up all hours of the night to look after patients, but refuses to let me, although I offer. I feel dreadful when others are told how often she goes without sleep."

"Anonymous," Freelng S.A.



"I just saw Agnes and she looks awful."

Whatever it is, you might as well face the fact that you're going to be related. This means that you must preserve at least surface friendliness.

If you don't, you'll start a lot of bickering that will only irritate your future husband. The degree of this irritation will depend on how fond he is of his sister; the fonder he is, the greater the irritation.

This friendliness is easier to preserve if you don't live together.

But, if you do, you'll have to play the situation along.

Let matron sit up nights and get the credit for her martyrdom. But do little things to help her — shopping or errands or a bit of personal ironing — and don't look for any credit for it.

"I am very thin and am five feet seven inches tall. I am 16 and am very self-conscious because I am so thin. No matter what I do I do not seem to be able to get fatter. Could you please help me by giving me some advice on how to increase my weight."

S. F., N.S.W.

MAKE up your mind either (a) to leave and get another job or (b) stay and make a go of getting on with the matron.

An outsider would have to know you, the matron, your fiance, and the full circumstances, including your job prospects, in order to advise you which would be the better course.

Obviously there's not much love lost between you and your future sister-in-law — a state of affairs which could be as much your fault as hers.

Perhaps you and she are so temperamentally inimical that you will never really like each other; or maybe you're just up against the usual law of love.

There are weight-increasing diets as well as reducing ones.

And they work, even for those "born thin."

Be sure, though, that you go to a sympathetic doctor. If you told this problem to some doctors they'd tell you you're making a song and dance about nothing, that you'll grow out of it, etc. So go to a physician who will realise your misery and be prepared to help you.

The rest is a case of dressing and making-up to look fatter.

FOR some real rough-house vocalising in the rugged jazz tradition you should make a point of hearing Ellen Sutton singing on HL1001 "You Ain't Gonna Get It." There's more than a touch of the famous and lamented Bessie Smith's shouting style. For the reverse, and just to show you that she can sing straight, Ellen does a smouldering number called "Then You'll Know."

OF the two songs on EA4187 you'll prefer Marilyn Monroe singing "I'm Gonna File My Claim," from her film "River of No Return." Flip is the film title song, but it's too slow-moving for the kid's torchy vocalising.

—BERNARD FLETCHER.

# Gossard STRAPLESS

For under your  
Shimmering pretties

### Gossard Nylon Satin Strapless Basque

86/3 each

Show your lovely shoulders with this strapless Nylon satin and nylon marquisette basque that does so much for lovely curves.

Sizes 32 - 38 even.

A and B Cups.

4215



Comfortably controlled  
and beautiful

### STRAPLESS FOUNDATION

by Gossard

146/3 ea.

Just what you've been asking for — a STRAPLESS foundation! And Gossard's strapless foundation is comfortable — as well as flattering! In white and nude Nylon satin with a nylon marquisette bra section. Boned front and back. Zip fastening.

Sizes 33 - 40 even.

B and C Cups.

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**NOW!**  
**A NEW KIND OF SOAP . . .**

# *Softasilk*

**CREAM MILD SOAP by COLGATE**

**Containing  
Beauty Cream**

**to give your skin that lovely "cared for" look**



**Pure, white**

**Softasilk  
Cream Mild Soap**

You can actually feel the Beauty Cream in this new Softasilk cream mild soap. You can feel the same softening ingredients used in expensive face creams. The fragrant cream-laden lather beautifies your skin as it cleanses, making it smoother, softer, younger. Pure, white Softasilk is the only soap that actually contains a beauty cream to replace natural skin oils every time you wash. Try it! Change to pure, white Softasilk to give your skin that lovely "cared for" look.



**New  
Beauty Partner for  
Softasilk Hand Beauty Cream**

that was forcing the venom out drop by drop, that must sooner or later come with a gush . . .

Elizabeth felt shaken and a little sick; she got up, and walked restlessly around the studio, stopping at the front window to stare down at the house. It was graceful, even under the leafless trees; stormy grey shingle, shuttered in white. The window trim needed painting, so did the rose trellises.

Her gaze halted. She stayed sharply still, fingers tightening in her palms. Because there was an answering-back stare from the quiet, supposedly empty house.

Like war at long range . . .

Continuing . . .

why did she think of that?

It was a face, pressed whitely against one of the upper windows, tilted a little in its blind stare up at the studio. It moved a trifle; a white hand lifted lazily. It watched, it waited for a shocking and boundless moment, and then a sudden turn of shoulder took it away out of sight.

It was the window of Noreen's room.

It was not Noreen's face.

Careful. This wasn't the time to slip on a stone or plunge head-on into a thrust-

## The Iron Cobweb

from page 3

ing branch. Elizabeth, running precipitately down the hill towards the house, closed her mind to what she would find there. She would know, and that was enough—and the only way to do it was pell-mell, like this, with action outdistancing thought and fear.

She reached the house and went in through the kitchen, because that was quicker. Warmth met her, and the screech, knowing silence of a just-emptied house. The oil burner started up with a throb.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23 December 20): High finance is the emphasis of August 25. You may get a new job, develop a sideline, go on a budget; in some way you'll fatten your pocket-book. August 28 for recreation.

VIRGO (August 23-September 22): You may be in the mood, August 27, to clarify a situation or overhaul personal relationships, with a view to a new deal which will become effective, August 28.

CAPRICORN (December 21-January 19): Travel may lead to accidents or a waste of time and money, August 26. Short journeys, hobbies, sports, and pastimes are under kindly stars, August 27, 28.

AQUARIUS (January 20-February 18): You may surprise yourself, family, and friends by starting on a new enterprise, August 25, and carrying it to a satisfactory conclusion, August 30.

PISCES (February 19-March 20): Lie low, August 25, adverse or deceptive circumstances could set you going in the wrong direction. August 27, 28 fine for lovers young and old.

a board creaked somewhere, the refrigerator gave a mechanical mutter and settled back to work.

Elizabeth, catching her breath with difficulty, called uncertainly, "Hello?"

And, at the foot of the stairs, "Constance . . . ?"

But she was alone in the house.

The quality of the silence suggested it; the front door, swinging inwards a lazy inch while she waited at the foot of the stairs with lifted face, confirmed it. Someone had closed down these stairs not much over a minute ago, and had not taken time to close the door securely.

Either that or, out of fear and a nearly sleepless night, she had shaped an innocent reflection into a face, and the door had been left that way earlier.

Upstairs Elizabeth found her answer. The door of Noreen's room was ajar, and she went in. It was a small room, slant-ceilinged, wallpapered in a pattern of ivy and curly pink flowers. There was a single bed and night table, a bureau, an armchair, a hooked rug full of clear palettes.

Throughout the air hung a heavy, sweet perfume, alien to Elizabeth, clearly wrong in that room.

There were two glass bottles on the bureau. Elizabeth uncapped them, sniffed at inanuous flower fragrances, and replaced them carefully. Outside Constance's door she hesitated a moment and then went in.

Her cousin's usually immaculate room was untidy today; to see the tweed suit Constance had worn that morning flung carelessly on

the bed and a rejected stocking draped rakishly over a chair was almost like catching Constance herself with no clothes on.

Elizabeth had no real attention for the room. She went to the dressing-table, tested a tall bottle of cologne and found it to be gardenia, and paused. Her heartbeats refused to quiet, the palms of her hands felt damp. What was this sense of urgent hurry, almost of personal danger?

She pulled her thoughts back. Whoever had worn that drench of perfume hadn't applied it here, unless . . .

At the back of the dressing-table, near the mirror, was a small something in pink-and-white-striped wrapping. It had been opened and loosely rewrapped.

Before Elizabeth's scruples could catch up with her fingers the striped paper had fallen away.

It was perfume—imported, costly—in a chaste, unopened white box. There was a card, and on it was written simply, "I hope you will accept this from H.W."

Elizabeth came aware suddenly of Constance's bedside clock. How long since she had come into the house—five minutes, six? She closed the door of her cousin's bedroom behind her and went down the stairs to the telephone. She heard her own voice, expressionless, giving the Brents' number, and then she waited and listened to the patient, empty drawl.

She was about to hang up when the receiver at the other end was lifted with a jostling sound and Lucy's voice, breathless, said, "Hello? Yes, hello, who is it?"

Breathless.

"Elizabeth. I wondered if by any chance you still had . . ."

Moments later, after pretending to write down an address

she didn't want, Elizabeth put the receiver back. The silent house, the witness walls and watchful mirrors that could have told her everything she wanted to know, were full of suggestions.

She didn't listen. She made herself a sandwich and tea, turned on a lamp against the threatening night, and settled down grimly with a book. Before she did any of those things she did a thing she had never done before: nonchalantly, trying not to notice herself doing it, she locked every door in the house.

The think that turned up so neatly and logically, its purpose spent, was Mrs. Bennett's pocketbook.

Noreen brought it to Elizabeth the next afternoon. "Excuse me, Mrs. March, but would you have any idea whose this is?"

Elizabeth took the bag and looked at it carefully. It was old and worn, its top clasp tarnished, its black fabric folds dusty.

Mrs. Bennett's cheerful voice seemed to emanate from it: "Oh, don't trouble your head about it, Mrs. March, it'll turn up, and small loss if it doesn't. It was an old thing, anyway—and in it but a handkerchief and a few old bills, and there's more where they came from . . ."

A received bill, from a public utility, perhaps . . . would that do for identification at a bank? Elizabeth didn't know.

She said, "Yes, it belonged to Mrs. Bennett, who used to take care of the children. She lost it here and we combed the house . . . where did you find it, Noreen?" And she knew the answer to that even before the girl spoke.

"In the closet in my room, way up on the shelf at the back. I did some Christmas

To page 47

## \* As I read the stars \* By EVE HILLIARD \*

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Conclude that little business deal to the satisfaction of both parties on the morning of August 28. August 30 may bring an awkward situation.

TAURUS (April 21-May 20): Make plans, August 26, for week-end enjoyment. Parties, entertainments, sporting fixtures, or a romantic date, if eligible, are Saturday's high-lights.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21): If house-hunting, August 25 is a thrill. Otherwise, an important purchase for the home, August 26. August 29 features improvements, interior decorating, or refurbishing the wardrobe.

CANCER (June 22-July 22): Set the date for that little expedition, which may concern a surprise you're trying to keep secret, for August 27. August 28 favors a happy completion of plans.

(The Australian Women's Weekly presents this astrological diary as a feature of interest only, without accepting any responsibility whatever for the statements contained in it.)

Polishing the floors . . . Cleaning the rugs . . . Freshening the chairs . . .



Your hands never touch dirt with the  
**HOOVER** Cylinder Cleaner...because there's  
no dustbag to empty

There's no cleaning job that the Hoover Cylinder Cleaner can't tackle . . . lino, carpets, stair-runners, upholstery, cushions, as well as those hard-to-reach corners. It swoops up deep-down dirt and, wonder of wonders, has no dirty dustbag . . . nothing to shake. Simply touch the trigger with your toe to empty. Ask your Hoover dealer for a demonstration!

\* \* \* \* \*

### WIN A HOLIDAY FOR TWO IN QUEENSLAND'S TROPICAL NORTH

After you have seen a demonstration, write in

not more than 50 words why you would like a

Hoover Cylinder Cleaner. A Hoover a

week will be given away for the

best entries received until

August 31st, with a special

prize of a luxury holiday

for two in Cairns, with air

travel both ways by A.N.A.

for the best entry of all.

**FREE HOLIDAY** I attach my entry in the

contest. "Why I would like a Hoover Cylinder Cleaner". If I win a Hoover and have in the meantime purchased one, I understand my full purchase price will be refunded.

Post to "Hoover Contest", Box 3761, G.P.O., Sydney.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

HC. 19. WWHPC

# SEE the difference Persil makes !

*She didn't realise her frock  
had lost its freshness . . .  
till she saw a Persil-washed one!*

DRESS WELL AND SAVE MONEY  
Bank girl tells.



Miss E. Brainwood,  
99 High Street,  
Willoughby,  
N.S.W.

Miss Brainwood of a well-known Sydney Bank, says: "Although I only make two frocks each summer I always have a wardrobe full. The reason? Persil keeps all my summer prints lovely season after season. I make a few style alterations and they look like new frocks".

Everyone knows that Persil washes whiter. It's a fact proved by years of experience. And Persil is every bit as good for coloureds. You see, Persil's millions of oxygen suds ease the dirt out of coloureds, just as they do out of whites, leaving them clean through and through. That's why Persil-washed coloureds come up fresh and vivid as new. Persil's gentle suds are safe for all your wash.



## PERSIL for coloureds !

# Spring Knitting and Crochet

Here are three pretty spring sweaters for late day and later. Two are for knitters and one for crochet enthusiasts, and all are surprisingly easy to make. Other bright ideas for spring featuring wool and cotton are on pages 42, 44, and 45.



**YOUTHFUL AND BECOMING** sweater has the low neckline and short sleeves laced with cord with pompon-finished ties. Designed for sizes 32 and 33.

## Pompon sweater

(Illustrated above)

Materials: 6oz. Patons "Nimbla" knitting wool; 1 pair each Nos. 10 and 13 knitting needles; 1 crochet hook.

Measurements: To fit 32-33 in. bust; length from top of shoulder, 20in.

Tension: 8½ sts. to 1in. in width.

### BACK

Using No. 13 needles, cast on 128 sts.

1st Row: \* K 1, p 1, rep. from \* to end of row.

Rep. 1st row until work measures 4in. from commencement.

Change to No. 10 needles and work in patt. as follows:

1st Row: K 1, \* k 2 tog., t.b.l., k 4, w.fwd., k 2, w.fwd., k 4, k 2 tog., rep. from \* to last st., k 1.

2nd Row: K 1, \* p 2 tog., p 3, w.r.n., p 4, w.r.n., p 3, p 2 tog., t.b.l., rep. from \* to last st., k 1.

3rd Row: K 1, \* k 2 tog., t.b.l., k 2, w.fwd., k 6, w.fwd., k 2, k 2 tog., rep. from \* to last st., k 1.

4th Row: K 1, \* p 2 tog., p 1, w.r.n., p 8, w.r.n., p 1, p 2 tog., t.b.l., rep. from \* to last st., k 1.

5th Row: K 1, \* k 2 tog., w.fwd., k 10, w.fwd., k 2 tog., rep. from \* to last st., k 1.

6th Row: K 1, \* p 1, w.r.n., p 4, p 2 tog., t.b.l., p 2 tog., p 4, w.r.n., p 1, rep. from \* to last st., k 1.

7th Row: K 1, \* k 2, w.fwd., k 3, k 2 tog., k 2 tog., t.b.l., k 3, w.fwd., k 2, rep. from \* to last st., k 1.

8th Row: K 1, \* p 3, w.r.n., p 2, p 2 tog., t.b.l., p 2 tog., p 2, w.r.n., p 3, rep. from \* to last st., k 1.

9th Row: K 1, \* k 4, w.fwd., k 1, k 2 tog., k 2 tog., t.b.l.

k 1, w.fwd., k 4, rep. from \* to last st., k 1.

10th Row: K 1, \* p 5, w.r.n., p 2 tog., t.b.l., p 2 tog., w.r.n., p 5, rep. from \* to last st., k 1.

Cont. working in patt., inc. once at each end of the fifth and every following 10th row until there are 156 sts. on needle.

Cont. without shaping until work measures 12in. from commencement.

Cast on 14 sts. at beg. of next 2 rows.

Cont. in patt., inc. once at each end of every 3rd row until there are 228 sts. on needle (15 patts.).

In Next Row: Work 86 sts., cast off 56 sts., work 86 sts.

Cont. on last 86 sts. as follows:

Next Row: Dec. 1 st. at neck edge.

Next Row: Cast off 3 sts. at neck edge.

Keeping continuity of patt., rep. the last 2 rows, and inc. an armhole edge every 3rd row until 53 sts. rem. Cast off.

Work other side to correspond.

Using No. 13 needles and with right side of work facing, pick up and knit 144 sts. around neck edge.

1st Row: Pur.

2nd Row: Knit.

Rep. 1st and 2nd rows once, then 1st row once.

6th Row: Using No. 10 needles, \* k 2 tog., w.r.n., k 2, rep. from \* to end of row.

7th Row: Pur.

Change to No. 13 needles and work 4 rows in st-st.

Cast off.

### FRONT

Work exactly as given for back until 13½ patt. from commencement (214 sts.).

Continued on page 45

## Berry-stitch sweater

(Illustrated at right)

Materials: 7 skeins F. W. Hughes "Twinprufe" 3-ply crepe wool, shade No. 2389 (spring yellow); 1 pair No. 10 needles and 1 set of 4 No. 12 needles.

Measurements: Length from top of shoulder, 20½in. (21-21½in.) to fit a 32in. (34-36in.) bust.

Tension: 8 sts., 1in., 10 rows 1in.

### BACK

Using No. 12 needles cast on 110 (114-118) sts. Work in rib of k 1, p 1 for 3½in. Change to No. 10 needles, p 10 (18-6), \* p twice into next st., p 4 (3-3), rep. from \* to end, 130 (138-146) sts. Work as follows.

1st Row (Right side): P.

2nd Row: K 1, \* (k 1, p 1, k 1) into next st., p 3 tog., rep. from \* to last st., k 1.

3rd Row: P.

4th Row: K 1, \* p 3 tog., (k 1, p 1, k 1) into next st., rep. from \* to last st., k 1.

These 4 rows complete the patt. Cont. in patt., when work measures 13in. (13½in.-14in.) cast on 4 sts. at beg. of the next 6 rows, 154 (162-170) sts. Cont. in patt. until the armhole measures 6½in. (6¾in.-7in.) —measured from the first cast-on sts. Cast off 8 (9-10) sts. at the beg. of the next 6 (6-8) rows. Cast off. Cast off.

### FRONT

Work same as for back to armholes.

Continued on page 45



## Crocheted evening sweater

SIMPLY styled sweater (above) featuring the old but evergreen berry stitch is gay in yellow, glamorous in pink, smart in white. Designed for sizes 32 to 36.



GLAMOROUS SWEATER in crochet has decorative bands formed of huge daisy motifs linked together. Designed for sizes 32 and 34. Directions this page.

Materials: 5 balls Patons "Nimbla" knitting wool (this is the only wool which should be used); Kuller-skeme crochet hook No. 13; daisy wheel; 5 small buttons.

Measurements (to fit 33-34in. bust): Length from top of shoulder, 19in.

Tension: 8 sts. to 1in. in width.

### FRONT AND BACK (both alike)

Make 112 ch., turn with 4 ch.

1st Row: 1 tr. into 4th ch. from hook, \* 1 tr. into every ch., rep. from \* to end of row.

2nd Row: 1 ch., turn, \* 1 d.c. into every tr., rep. from \* to end of row.

3rd Row: 4 ch., turn, \* 1 tr. into every d.c. (working into back st. throughout), rep. from \* to end of row, 1 ch., turn.

Rep. 2nd row until work measures 25in. from commencement. Faster off. Make 42 daisies.

To Make Daisies: Place wheel knob downwards in left hand. Put wool on flat side of wheel and hold in position in centre with thumb of left hand. Wind wool over a point of wheel and over point exactly opposite; rep. this four times, taking care not to cross wool in centre (5 loops on both points). Pass to next point and its opposite and wind wool in same manner. Rep. until all points are used (12 petals).

Break off wool 6in. from wheel, thread a darning needle, and stitch over and over diagonally between each petal in centre of daisy. Draw into a circle.

Continued on page 45

# STYLED FOR SPRING



**MAKE AND WEAR**  
this shrug jacket to  
dramatise a low-cut  
black dress or give an  
air of lacy charm to a  
white or delicate  
pink frock. Complete  
directions this page.

The elegant shrug jacket pictured at left was created by one of London's topline designers. It is made of simply crocheted circles linked together with spider-like motifs. The lacy sweater illustrated at lower left will appeal to every woman.

**DIRECTIONS** for shrug jacket.

**Materials:** Approx. 6 balls Clarks tatting cotton No. 2; Milward's steel hook No. 2; 1 pr. No. 12 knitting needles.

**Gauge:** 1 motif measures 5in. in diameter.

## MOTIF

Ch. 7, join into first ch. with sl-st. to form a ring.

1st Row: Work 12 d.c. into ring, join with a sl-st.

2nd Row: Ch. 6, \* 1 tr. in next st., ch. 3, rep. from \* around, join with sl-st. to 3rd ch. at start (12 spaces).

3rd Row: Work 1 half tr., 3 tr., 1 half tr. in each space around (12 scallops), join to first half tr. with sl-st.

4th Row: Ch. 9, \* 1 tr. in space between next 2 scallops. Ch. 6, rep. from \* around, join to 3rd ch. at start, sl-st. to next tr.

5th Row: Ch. 3, \* 6 tr. in next sp., 1 tr. in next tr., rep. from \* around, ending with a sl-st. to 3rd ch. at start, sl-st. to next tr.

6th Row: Ch. 3, 1 tr. in each of next 5 sts., \* ch. 2, skip next st., 1 tr. in each of the next 6 sts. (Be sure spare comes directly over tr. post of row 4.) Rep. from \* around, ending ch. 2, skip 1 st., sl-st. to 3rd ch. at start.

7th Row: Ch. 3, 1 tr. in each of next 5 sts., \* ch. 3, 1 tr. in each of next 6 sts., rep. from \* around, ending ch. 3, sl-st. to 3rd ch. at start.

8th Row: Same as 7th row, having ch. 4 between tr. groups.

9th Row: Ch. 1, 1 d.c. in each of the first 2 trs. of previous row, \* ch. 9 (pivot). 1

d.c. in each of next 3 sts., 1 d.c. in space, ch. 3, 1 d.c. in same space, 1 d.c. in each of the next 3 tr., rep. from \* around, sl-st. to start of row. Break thread and fasten.

Work second motif in same manner, joining to first motif on 9th row as follows:

Work across to space, 1 d.c. in space, join to pivot above a space on first motif by ch. 1, sl-st. to pivot, ch. 1, 1 d.c. in same space (on second motif), 1 d.c. in each of next 3 sts., ch. 1, sl-st. to next pivot on first motif, ch. 1, 1 d.c. in each of next 3 sts., join 3rd pivot same as first, cont. around motif with row 9 of patt.

Join third motif in same manner, having 1 space (3 picots) between first and third motifs.

Join fourth motif to third, having 1 space (3 picots) between fourth and second motifs, then join to first motif.

## SPIDER

(For large opening between motifs.)

Ch. 5, join in ring with a sl-st., \* ch. 7, sl-st. to pivot above the ch. 4 space of row 8. ch. 7, work 1 d.c. in ring, ch. 7, sl-st. to next pivot, ch. 5, sl-st. to joining of motifs, ch. 5, sl-st. to next pivot (of next motif), ch. 7, 1 d.c. in ring, rep. from \* 3 times more, break thread and fasten.

## HALF-SPIDERS

(For space between motifs at outer edge.)

Ch. 5, join in ring with a sl-st., ch. 7, sl-st. to pivot above first space from the joining of motifs (working from right to left), ch. 7, 1 d.c. in ring, ch.



**MEDALLION** which is used for the shrug jacket illustrated on this page.

7, sl-st. in next pivot, ch. 5, sl-st. to joining of motifs, ch. 5, sl-st. to next pivot (of next motif), ch. 7, 1 d.c. in ring, ch. 7, sl-st. to next pivot, ch. 7, sl-st. in ring. Break thread and fasten.

Work 15 motifs in all, joining to previous motif on row 9, having 3 motifs in length and 3 in width. Work spiders in centre spaces and half-spiders at outer edge between motifs.

## RIBBING CUFFS

With size No. 12 needles, pick up and k 126 sts. at each end of work (across the 3 motifs). Work in ribbing of 1/2 p. 2, dec. 38 sts. across first row as follows: Work across 5 sts., work next 2 sts. tog., then every second and third st., tog. 37 times more (88 sts. on needle). When ribbing measures 4in., cast off loosely in ribbing. Work ribbing at other end the same. Sew seam of cuffs.

## LACY SWEATER (for sizes 32 to 36.)

**Materials:** 9oz. Villawool "Horizon" 3-ply crochet wool; 1 pr. each of Nos. 11 and 12 knitting needles.

**Measurements:** Size A, 32in. bust, length 18½in., size B, 34in. bust, length 18½in.; size C, 36in. bust, length 19½in.

**Tension:** 8 sts. to 1in.; 11 rows to 1in. (over patt.).

## BACK

With No. 12 needles, cast on 120 sts. (B, 128 sts.; C, 136 sts.).

Work in rib of 1, p. 1 for 3in. (B, 3in.; C, 3in.).

Dec. 19 sts. evenly along last rib row.

There are now 101 sts. (B, 109 sts.; C, 117 sts.) on needle.

Change to No. 11 needles and work in patt. as follows:

1st Row: Knit.

2nd Row: Purl.

3rd Row: Knit.

4th Row: \* P 5, k 3, \* rep. from \* to \* to last 5 sts., k 5.

5th Row: \* K 6, wool forward, k 2 tog., \* rep. from \* to \* to last 5 sts., k 5.

6th Row: Same as 4th row.

7th Row: K 4, \* k 2 tog., wool forward, k 1, wool forward, k 2 tog., k 3, \* rep. from \* to \* to last st., k 1.

8th Row: Same as 4th row.

9th Row: Same as 1st row.

10th Row: Same as 2nd row.

11th Row: Same as 3rd row.

12th Row: P 1, \* k 3, p 5, \* rep. from \* to \* to last 4 sts., k 3, p 1.

13th Row: K 2, \* wool forward, k 2 tog., k 6, \* rep. from \* to \* to last 3 sts., wool forward, k 2 tog., k 1.

14th Row: Same as 12th row.

15th Row: \* K 2 tog., wool

forward, k 1, wool forward, k 2 tog., k 3, \* rep. from \* to last 5 sts., k 2 tog., wool forward, k 1, wool forward, k 2 tog.

16th Row: Same as 12th row.

These 16 rows form the patt. and are worked throughout the sweater.

Working in the patt., inc. 1 st. at both ends of next and every following 4th row until there are 125 sts. (B, 133 sts.; C, 141 sts.) on needle. Cont. in patt. without inc. until work measures 10in. (B, 10in.; C, 10½in.), ending with a purl row.

To Shape Sleeves: Keeping to patt., cast on 4 sts. at beg. of next 4 rows.

Cast on 24 sts. at the beg. of following 2 rows.

There are now 189 sts. (B, 197 sts.; C, 205 sts.) on needle. Place a marker here.

Still working in patt., inc. 1 st. at both ends of every 3rd row until there are 221 sts. (B, 229 sts.; C, 237 sts.) on needle.

Cont. without inc. until work measures 5½in. (B, 5½in.; C, 6in.) from marker. End with a purl row.

To Shape Top of Sleeves: Keeping continuity of patt., cast off 2 sts. at beg. of next 8 rows.

Cast off 3 sts. at beg. of next 28 rows (B, 30 rows; C, 32 rows).

To Shape Neck: Cast off 3 sts. at beg. of next row, work 45 sts. in patt., cast off 25 sts. (B, 27 sts.; C, 29 sts.) work over last 48 sts. in patt.

Work last 48 sts. only, leaving 45 sts. on spare needle.

Next Row: Cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge, work in patt. to end of row. Cont. to cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge on every alt. row 6 more times, at the same time cast off sts. at neck edge thus:

Cast off 4 sts. every alt. row 3 times.

Cast off 3 sts. every alt. row 3 times.

Cast off rem. 6 sts.

Attach wool to other side of back at neck edge, and work this side to correspond with first side, reversing shapings.

## FRONT

Work as for back until there are 221 sts. (B, 229 sts.; C, 237 sts.) on needle.

Work without inc. until work measures 5½in. (B, 5½in.; C, 6in.) from market.

To Shape Top of Sleeve: Cast off 2 sts. at beg. of next row, work 88 sts. (B, 91 sts.; C, 94 sts.). Cast off 11 sts. (B, 13 sts.; C, 15 sts.), and work over 91 sts. (B, 94 sts.; C, 97 sts.).

Work on last 91 sts. (B, 94 sts.; C, 97 sts.), leaving 88 sts. (B, 91 sts.; C, 94 sts.) on spare needle.

1st Row: Cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge, work even to end of row.

2nd Row: Cast off 4 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

3rd Row, 5th Row, 7th Row, and 9th Row: Cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge, work even to end of row.

4th Row: Cast off 3 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

To page 45

part of your pleasure is...

# Mastercraft CREAM BAR

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You'll love this smooth, creamy filling that melts in your mouth. Deliciously flavoured with Vanilla, covered with dark chocolate. The sweetest treat you'll ever eat!



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Get towels really clean...  
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To get everything in your wash clean right through, you must have Sunlight's extra washing power—particularly on the extra dirty spots. Just a touch of faster-lathering Sunlight loosens every speck of dirt gets all your wash gloriously clean.

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MY FOUR GRANDCHILDREN ARE CONSTANT VISITORS, AND THEY DROP FOOD SCRAPS ON THE CARPET, BUT A LITTLE SUNLIGHT LATHER QUICKLY GETS IT LIKE NEW AGAIN.

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## Tunic-top sweater

This cable-stitch-trimmed sweater for teenagers has a neat tunic-top neckline.

DIRECTIONS are given for three sizes.

Materials: 6 (7, 8) skeins F.W. Hughes "Twimpurfe" 4-ply fingering wool, shade No. 1085 (maize), 1 pair each Nos. 10 and 12 needles.

Measurements: Length from top of shoulder, 17in. (17.18in.); bust, 32in. (34, 36in.).

Tension: 8½ sts. 1in., 10 rows, 1in.

### BACK

Using No. 12 needles, cast on 110 (118, 126) sts. Work in rib of k 1, p 1 for 3in., increasing 17 (17, 11) sts. on last row, 127 (135, 137) sts.

Change to No. 10 needles and work in patt. as follows:

1st Row: (Wrong side of work): K 2 (6, 7) sts., \* p 6, k 2, rep. from \* to last 8 (12, 13) sts., p 6, then k 2 (6, 7) sts.

2nd Row: P 2 (6, 7) sts., \* k 6, p 7, rep. from \* across to last 8 (12, 13) sts., k 6, then p 2 (6, 7) sts.

3rd Row: Rep. 1st row.

4th Row: P 2 (6, 7) sts., \* make a cable (to make a cable, slip first st. on to a double-pointed needle and place in back of work, knit into the back of 5th knitted st. on left hand needle, k 4, slip the 5th st. off left hand needle, knit the st. from spare needle), p 7, rep. from \* across to last 8 (12, 13) sts. Cable 6, p 2 (6, 7) sts.

5th Row: K 2 (6, 7), \* p 2, k 2, p 2, k 7, rep. from \* to last 8 (12, 13) sts., p 2, k 2, p 2, k 2 (6, 7).

6th Row: P 2 (6, 7), \* k 2, p 2, k 2, p 7, rep. from \* to last 8 (12, 13) sts., k 2, p 2, k 2, p 2 (6, 7).

7th Row: Rep. 5th row.

8th Row: Rep. 6th row.

Work in patt., increasing 1 st. at both ends of every 8th row until increased to 137 (145, 153) sts. Work in patt. without increasing until work measures 9½ (9½, 10) in.

To Shape Armholes—Cast off 8 sts. at beg. of next 2 rows. Cast off 3 sts. at the beg. of following 2 (4, 6) rows. Cast off 2 sts. at the beg. of next 2 (2, 4) rows. Dec. 1 st. at both ends of every other row until 105 sts. remain. Work without decreasing until armhole measures 6½ (6½, 6½) in.

To Shape Neckholes—Cast off



from first row of armhole shaping, ending with 5th row of patt.

To Shape Neck—1st Row: Work in patt. across first 14 sts., k across to last 14 sts. work in patt. across last 14 sts.

2nd Row: Work in patt. across first 14 sts., p across to last 14 sts. work in patt. across last 14 sts.

3rd Row: Work in patt. across first 14 sts. Cast off next 77 sts. work in patt. across last 14 sts. Turn and work in patt. over the last set of sts. only, until piece measures from 1st row of armhole shaping 7½ (7½, 8) in. Cast off.

Join wool to opposite side of neck shaping and work to correspond with other side.

### FRONT

Work exactly as for back until piece measures, from first row of armhole shaping, 1½ (1½, 2) in., ending with 5th row of patt. Now, starting at "To Shape Neck," complete as for back.

### BACK NECKBAND

Using No. 12 needles, cast on 105 sts. and work in ribbing as follows:

1st Row: \* K 1, p 1, rep. from \* across, ending with k 1.

2nd Row: \* P 1, k 1, rep. from \* across, ending with p 1. Rep. last 2 rows until piece measures 1in.

Next Row: Work in ribbing

FIRM, welted band of ribbing goes around the neckline and armholes of this cable-stitch sweater. Directions are for sizes 32, 34, and 36.

across first 11 sts. Cast off 81 sts., work in ribbing across last 11 sts. Turn and work in ribbing over the last set of sts. only for jin. Cast off.

Join wool to opposite side and work to correspond.

### FRONT NECKBAND

Work as for back neckband until piece measures 1in.

Next Row: Work in ribbing across first 11 sts. Cast off next 83 sts. Work in ribbing across last 11 sts. Turn and work in ribbing over the last set of sts. only until piece measures 3½ in. in all, or reaches to shoulder. Cast off.

Join wool to opposite side and work to correspond.

### ARMBAND (Make 2)

With No. 12 needles, cast on 11 sts. Work in ribbing as for back neckband until piece reaches around armhole edge. Cast off.

### TO MAKE UP

Press all parts except ribbing with a warm iron and a damp cloth. Sew neckbands in place over edge of neckline. Sew shoulder and neckband seams. Sew armbands in place. Sew up side seams, including armbands.

## Macrame set

Crochet these pretty macrame necklace and bracelet sets in a variety of colors to wear with summer frocks.

HERE are the directions for making:

Materials: 1 ball of Strutt's macrame twine, selected color No. 10; Milward steel crochet hook, 2½-17.

Commence with 202 chain. Slip-stitch into 8th chain from hook to make a loop, slip-stitch in each of the next 16 chain. Work 2 treble in each of the next 154 chain, slip-stitch over last 24 chain, turn in the end to make a button to fit loop on other side, or else sew on small button.

### BRACELETS

Materials: Macrame twine No. 10 in selected colors, 1 small button to be sewn on right side, in centre near edge.

Commence with 87 ch., then work 1 st. st. into 7th ch. from hook to make a loop. Work



LIGHT, washable, and cool to wear, the spiral twist in the bracelets and necklace is made with only two simple crochet stitches. See directions.

2 dbl. tr. into each of next 80 ch. (160 dbl. trs.), fasten off. Sew button on right side opposite loop.

If a larger size should be required put on a few extra chain, or if a smaller bracelet is required cast on less chain.



# Light and lacy



## SHAWL IN SIMPLE CROCHET

**Materials:** 2 balls Patons Lucelle Fine Ply (this is the only wool which should be used); Kuller-skeine crochet hook No. 9.

**Measurements:** Width across top, 42in.

**Tension:** 1 patt. equals 1in. in width.

Commencing at top, make a chain 42in. in length. \* Draw out st. on hook to form about half an inch loop; wool over hook and draw through loop, insert hook into back thread of loop, wool over, draw through, wool over, draw through both loops on hook (knot-st.). Work another knot-st., miss 3 ch., 1 d.c. into next ch. \* Rep. from \* to \* 41-times. Turn. Work in centre, as illustrated.

**DAISY PATTERN** which forms the border of the lilac evening sweater which is illustrated in color on page 41.

## Lilac evening sweater

Continued from page 41  
firm centre and fasten off securely.

**To Join Daisies:** When joining daisies, a picot must be worked on every third petal throughout.

Using crochet hook, work as follows—Sl-st. into petal No. 1, 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 2, 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 3, 6 ch., sl-st. into sl-st. in petal No. 5 (1st picot), \* 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 4, 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 5, 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 6, 6 ch., sl-st. into sl-st. in petal No. 6, 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 7, 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 8.

Take another daisy, sl-st. into a petal which will be called petal No. 1, 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 2, remove hook from st. and insert in sl-st. at petal No. 7 (1st daisy), draw st. just taken off hook through petal No. 7, 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 3 (2nd daisy), 3 ch., remove hook and insert into centre of st. of picot loop at petal No. 6 (1st daisy) and draw st. just taken off hook through 3 ch., sl-st. into sl-st. at petal No. 3 (2nd daisy). Rep. from \* adding a new daisy every 8th petal until there are 22 daisies. Cont. joining petals of 22nd daisy by 6 ch. and sl-st., making a picot in 6th and 9th petals until petal No. 11 is joined. \*\* Proceed as follows:

6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 12, 6 ch., sl-st. into sl-st. in petal No. 12, 6 ch., remove hook from st. and insert in sl-st. joining petals Nos. 1 and 8 and draw st. taken off hook through sl-st., 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 9, 3 ch., remove hook and insert into centre of st. of picot loop of petal No. 12, draw st. just taken off hook through 3 ch., sl-st. into sl-st. of petal No. 9, 6 ch. and sl-st. into petal No. 10, 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 11. Rep. from \*\* until petal No. 11 of first daisy is reached. 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 12, 6 ch., sl-st. into sl-st. of petal No. 12, 6 ch., sl-st. into petal No. 1.

### NECK EDGE

Make 2 pieces in same manner for sleeves, joining 10 sts. in each piece. The edging for daisy band for neck edge:

**1st Row:** (Work 3 d.c. into 1ch. between each petal, 1 d.c. into each picot) four times, \* 1 d.c. into 6th ch. between each petal; 1 d.c. into each picot) three times, (3 d.c. into 6th ch. between each petal, 1 d.c. into each picot) eight times, (2 d.c. into 6th ch. between each petal, 1 d.c. into each picot) three times, (3 d.c. into 6th ch. between each petal, 1 d.c. into each picot) four times.

**2nd Row:** 1 ch., turn, \* 1 d.c. into each d.c., working into back st., rep. from \* to end of row.

Rep. 2nd row twice. Fasten off. \*\*

### EDGING FOR SLEEVES

**1st Row:** \* Work 3 d.c. into



THIS LUXURIOUS crocheted stole is 2½ yards long and 26 inches wide. Directions for making are below.

## LUXURIOUS STOLE

**Materials:** 8 skeins F. W. Hughes' "Twimpire" 2-ply fingering wool (this is the only wool which should be used); 1 No. 7 bone crochet hook.

**Measurements:** Length, 24 yds.; width, 26in.

**Abbreviations:** Ch., chain;

d.c., double crochet; sl., slip; ltr., long treble.

Crochet loosely 85 ch., turn.

**1st Row:** Work 9 ltr. into 5th ch. from hook. \* 3 ch., miss 3 ch., 1 d.c. into next ch., miss 3 ch., 9 ltr. into next ch., rep. from \* to end, turn.

**2nd Row:** Miss 1 ltr., sl-st. into both top loops of the next 4 ltr., \* 4 ch., 9 ltr. into d.c. of 1st row, 1 d.c. into centre of ltr. group, rep. from \* to end of row, turn.

**TO MAKE UP**  
With slightly damp cloth and warm iron, press lightly. Using flat seam, sew up shoulder seams. Sew daisy bands in position round neck and sleeve edges. Sew up side seams, leaving left side open about 3in. at lower edge. Sew waistband in position, commencing and ending at side opening. Work 2 rows d.c. round side opening, working 3 buttonhole loops on waistband and 2 on side of front. Sew on buttons to correspond with loops. Press seams. Fasten off.

**Next Row:** Crochet 3 ch., 1 d.c. into centre of ltr. group, 3 ch., 1 d.c. into d.c. of next ltr. group, rep. from \* to end of row.

Join wool at corner, crochet 2 ch., 9 ltr. into 1st group, 2 ch., 1 d.c. into next ltr. group.

Rep. this along both ends. Fasten off.

sl., slip; ltr., long treble.

Crochet loosely 85 ch., turn.

**1st Row:** Work 9 ltr. into 5th ch. from hook. \* 3 ch., miss 3 ch., 1 d.c. into next ch., miss 3 ch., 9 ltr. into next ch., rep. from \* to end, turn.

**2nd Row:** Miss 1 ltr., sl-st. into both top loops of the next 4 ltr., \* 4 ch., 9 ltr. into d.c. of 1st row, 1 d.c. into centre of ltr. group, rep. from \* to end of row, turn.

**3rd Row:** 4 ch., 9 ltr. into d.c. at end of 2nd row, \* 3 ch., 1 d.c. into centre of ltr. group, 4 ch., 9 ltr. into d.c. of next ltr. group, rep. from \* to end, turn.

Rep. 2nd and 3rd rows until required length.

**Next Row:** Crochet 3 ch., 1 d.c. into centre of ltr. group, 3 ch., 1 d.c. into d.c. of next ltr. group.

Join wool at corner, crochet 2 ch., 9 ltr. into 1st group, 2 ch., 1 d.c. into next ltr. group.

Rep. this along both ends. Fasten off.



THE FILMY SHAWL in simple crochet offers year-round service. It can also be worn over your head or tied around your neck.

## Pompon sweater

Continued from page 41

In Next Row: Work 79 sts., cast off 56 sts., work 79 sts.

Cont. on last 79 sts.

Next Row: Dec. 1 st. at neck edge.

Next Row: Cast off 3 sts. at neck edge.

Keeping continuity of patt. rep. the last 2 rows, and inc. at armhole edge every 3rd row until 53 sts. rem.

Cont. without shaping until work measures same as back. Cast off.

Work other side in same manner.

Using No. 15 needles and with right side of work facing, pick up and knit 156 sts. around neck edge.

1st Row: Purl.

2nd Row: Knit.  
Rep. 1st and 2nd rows once, then 1st row once.

6th Row: Using No. 10 needles, \* k 2 tog., w.r.n., k 2, rep. from \* to end of row.

7th Row: Purl.  
Change to No. 13 needles and work 4 rows in st-st. Cast off.

Using flat seam for neck edging and an 8in. back-st. seam, sew up shoulder seams.

Using No. 13 needles and with right side of work facing, pick up and knit 100 sts. around armhole edge.

1st Row: Purl.

2nd Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

8th Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

Cont. to dec. 1 st. at neck edge and cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge every alt. row 9 times.

Then dec. 1 st. at neck edge every 3rd row, at the same time cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge.

Using flat seam for neck edging and an 8in. back-st. seam, sew up shoulder seams.

Using No. 13 needles and with right side of work facing, pick up and knit 100 sts. around armhole edge.

1st Row: Purl.

2nd Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

8th Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

Cont. to dec. 1 st. at neck edge and cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge every alt. row 9 times.

Then dec. 1 st. at neck edge every 3rd row, at the same time cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge.

Using flat seam for neck edging and an 8in. back-st. seam, sew up shoulder seams.

Using No. 13 needles and with right side of work facing, pick up and knit 100 sts. around armhole edge.

1st Row: Purl.

2nd Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

8th Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

Cont. to dec. 1 st. at neck edge and cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge every alt. row 9 times.

Then dec. 1 st. at neck edge every 3rd row, at the same time cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge.

Using flat seam for neck edging and an 8in. back-st. seam, sew up shoulder seams.

Using No. 13 needles and with right side of work facing, pick up and knit 100 sts. around armhole edge.

1st Row: Purl.

2nd Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

8th Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

Cont. to dec. 1 st. at neck edge and cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge every alt. row 9 times.

Then dec. 1 st. at neck edge every 3rd row, at the same time cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge.

Using flat seam for neck edging and an 8in. back-st. seam, sew up shoulder seams.

Using No. 13 needles and with right side of work facing, pick up and knit 100 sts. around armhole edge.

1st Row: Purl.

2nd Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

8th Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

Cont. to dec. 1 st. at neck edge and cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge every alt. row 9 times.

Then dec. 1 st. at neck edge every 3rd row, at the same time cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge.

Using flat seam for neck edging and an 8in. back-st. seam, sew up shoulder seams.

Using No. 13 needles and with right side of work facing, pick up and knit 100 sts. around armhole edge.

1st Row: Purl.

2nd Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

8th Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

Cont. to dec. 1 st. at neck edge and cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge every alt. row 9 times.

Then dec. 1 st. at neck edge every 3rd row, at the same time cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge.

Using flat seam for neck edging and an 8in. back-st. seam, sew up shoulder seams.

Using No. 13 needles and with right side of work facing, pick up and knit 100 sts. around armhole edge.

1st Row: Purl.

2nd Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

8th Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

Cont. to dec. 1 st. at neck edge and cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge every alt. row 9 times.

Then dec. 1 st. at neck edge every 3rd row, at the same time cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge.

Using flat seam for neck edging and an 8in. back-st. seam, sew up shoulder seams.

Using No. 13 needles and with right side of work facing, pick up and knit 100 sts. around armhole edge.

1st Row: Purl.

2nd Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

8th Row: Cast off 2 sts. at neck edge, work even to end of row.

Cont. to dec. 1 st. at neck edge and cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge every alt. row 9 times.

Then dec. 1 st. at neck edge every 3rd row, at the same time cast off 3 sts. at sleeve edge.

Using flat seam for neck edging and an 8in. back-st. seam, sew up shoulder seams.

Using No. 13 needles and with right side of work facing, pick up and knit 100 sts. around armhole edge.

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1st Row: Purl.

2nd Row:

Look what **Sunbeam**  
**MIXMASTER**  
does for you....



**ONLY SUNBEAM MIXMASTER HAS ALL THESE FEATURES . . . IT'S A REAL FOOD MIXER**

**SUNBEAM BOWL-SPEED CONTROL.** A special nylon button fitted to one of the Mixmaster beaters contacts the inside surface of the bowl and turns the bowl automatically on a revolving disc, thus keeping bowl-speed and beater-speed uniform.

**SUNBEAM MIX-FINDER DIAL.** Selects scientifically correct heating speeds for all food-mixing tasks. Hundreds of different speeds may be "tuned in" to meet individual requirements.

**SUNBEAM BEATER EJECTOR.** Automatically ejects the glistening Sunbeam "full mix" beaters by simply flicking the handle. No unscrewing—no messy fingers.

**SUNBEAM JUICE EXTRACTOR.** Gets all the juice automatically, faster, cleaner.

**SUNBEAM PORTABILITY.** Take the beaters to a saucepan on the stove, simply, easily, safely—nothing to go wrong.

**SUNBEAM BEATER ADJUSTMENT LEVER.** Adjusts correct beater position for both bowls—automatically.

**SUNBEAM FULL-POWER MOTOR.** The powerful governor-controlled Sunbeam motor, with power to spare, gives smooth running and even mixing on every speed . . . handling up to 6 lbs. of mixture at once.

Mixmaster-mixed cakes stand supreme . . . they're so much lighter and finer textured—and they rise so much higher. *Everything* mixed by Mixmaster not only looks better, but *tastes* better, too. And remember . . . Mixmaster makes cooking *easy*—it does all the hard work for you.

Made and guaranteed by **Sunbeam** CORPORATION LTD., Sydney. Sold by authorised electrical dealers and leading department stores throughout Australia.

shopping this morning, and when I put the presents away I felt it there... I hope Mrs. Bennett remembers just what was in it," said Noreen, her color high, "because I never touched it at all, Mrs. March, except to bring it straight down to you."

She gave her head a quick, perplexed shake and gazed troubled down at the bag. This, thought Elizabeth, must be the perpetual nightmare of people working in other people's houses. She said quickly, "Of course not," and then, "Thanks, Noreen. I'll take care of it."

So the errand of the intruder in Noreen's room yesterday was explained. The pocketbook had not been in the closet when Noreen moved her things in; Mrs. Bennett had given the room a thorough turning-out and Elizabeth herself had inspected it.

The placing of it there could only be a safeguard, an ace in the hole if the matter of the forged cheques should ever come under open discussion. How logically the suggestion of searching Noreen's room could be presented.

And it might have worked if Elizabeth hadn't seen the face in the window, the face that was not Noreen's. It was a purely negative identification, but none the less certain for

Continuing . . .

## The Iron Cobweb

from page 39

that: if you saw something jarringly wrong, and were only allowed a fleeting instant, you couldn't assign it to its proper background. You could only know that it was out of context.

What had it been in the case of the face in the window-height, contour, quality of movement?

Elizabeth took the pocketbook to her room and examined it. Mrs. Bennett had been accurate; there was a handkerchief, a hairpin, a stamp, a plumber's bill. It told her nothing except the manner of its arrival in the house.

Sitting there on the edge of her bed, Elizabeth knew with a feeling that was half-dread and half relief that the time had come to tell Oliver about the cheques, the time until he came home seemed suddenly endless and empty.

Noreen was heating soup and cutting bread; she turned to smile at Elizabeth and then at Maire. "Tell Mama what you saw this afternoon."

"A buffalo," said Maire, radiant.

"Maire!"

Maire turned her face away from Noreen's reproachful gaze and addressed herself importantly to Elizabeth. The buf-

falo dwindled and then disappeared as she lost interest; they had, it turned out, seen ducks instead, and Jeep had cried all the way home.

Elizabeth said seriously, "He's little, he gets tired, and . . . Come to think of it, where is Jeep?"

Jeep was in the small back L of the kitchen, peacefully oiling his tricycle with mustard, from which he was separated with great difficulty. Noreen set the table for their supper. Elizabeth left them in an absorbed silence and went into the living-room to wait for Oliver.

### O

LIVER would believe her now, Elizabeth told herself, because he had to; the watchful, impersonal look would go out of his eyes. If there were someone else who understood, someone else to watch the narrow line between normality and disaster, then she could stand it. She could stand anything as long as Oliver was with her, as he would be, as he couldn't help being . . .

It was five-thirty, and then a quarter to six, and Elizabeth dropped all pretence of reading and walked nervously up and down the length of the room, cupping her hands against her eyes to stare out into the dark. The children finished their supper and followed Noreen upstairs for their bath, and Oliver still had not come . . . Elizabeth went on pacing.

Her own reflection in a mirror caught and stopped her. Pale, pointed face, emptied of its assurance, filled with inner questions. No color at all in her cheeks, her lips, just the startlingly dark arch of brows and evening of lashes around frightened eyes.

It wouldn't do under Oliver's

critical gaze. She ran upstairs. The children were splashing in the tub, and there was a line of light under Constance's bedroom door. In their own bathroom Elizabeth washed her face in icy water, put a flick of powder over the resultant pink, used her lipstick. She looked better now—still not like a seasoned mother of two, not like the Elizabeth March looking tiltedly out of her book jackets—but better.

There was the doorbell; was Oliver locked out, or was it the telephone? Elizabeth opened the bedroom door and listened, and heard the rustle of bath water and a shouted "That's MY duck." And something else. Oliver's voice.

His car must have driven in just as she had gone up the stairs. Elizabeth went along the hall and stopped with her foot on the top step of the stairs and her call frozen in her throat.

Below her, beyond the curve of the banister railing, Oliver said softly and concentratedly, "Friday noon. Same place . . . Right. And look, I told you—don't call me here again."

He said "Right" again, but Elizabeth only half-heard that and didn't hear the click of the receiver at all.

"Windy out," said Oliver, "and getting cold as the devil. Shall we have a fire? Yes, we shall."

His topcoat and the evening paper went haphazardly into a chair. He knelt at the fireplace, saying casually over his shoulder, "Where's everybody? Kids in bed?"

Elizabeth clasped her cold hands tightly together behind her back. "About to be . . . Did the phone ring just now, or was I hearing things?"

Oliver balanced logs and struck a match. He said cheerfully, standing again, "It did. Wrong number." The kindling and newspaper blazed high,

### Money from pulling faces

THERE'S a man in Sydney whose work sometimes requires him to pull faces at himself in a mirror.

His name is Eric Porter, and the face-pulling is necessary for him to get expression into the faces of the characters in his animated cartoons, which have proved good enough to earn dollars on the screens of the United States.

Porter, who works in the same way as the famous Walt Disney, is producing the third of a series of seven-minute pictures in which the leading character is his own creation, Biimbo the Wombat.

You can read about this enterprising Australian and see color pictures of his fascinating cartoon characters in the August 24 issue of A.M., the weekly magazine for the whole family.

and waves of light washed concealingly over his face. "Drink?"

That was what bothered Elizabeth most of all—the easy good humor he hadn't shown for weeks. As though the telephone call and his Friday appointment had transformed him; as though lying to her idly, expertly, gave the thing an extra filip.

She was glad the firelight masked her own face; she could feel her cheeks burning with shock. That was odd, because her hands and her feet and the very centre of herself felt so deadly, bitterly cold.

They had cocktails, and Constance came downstairs wearing

To page 50

### IN AND OUT OF SOCIETY



BY RUD

## THE CARBOLIC SMELL HAS GONE!

# Lifebuoy now has Brand-New Perfume

Stops "B.O." as never before



The carbolic smell has gone! In its place is a refreshing, brand-new fragrance your whole family will love. 3 out 4 people who've tried it have already voted new Lifebuoy's perfume best!

Wash your perspiration worries away! Nothing could be nicer than a daily bath with Lifebuoy . . . and that's all you need to protect you from "B.O.". It's the modern way to stay sweet and clean.

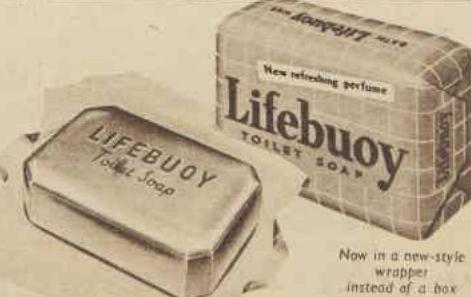
Lifebuoy stops "B.O." before it starts. Gentle, fresh-smelling Lifebuoy contains Puralin to purify and deodorise better than any other toilet soap. Your whole body will glow because it's so clean.

Contains PURALIN, new purifying ingredient  
to stop "B.O." hours longer

It's in the shops now . . . and it's the biggest news in toilet soaps for years! The new Lifebuoy with a refreshingly different perfume containing Puralin, a purifying ingredient which stops "B.O." the modern

way! Yes, the carbolic smell has gone—yet new, fragrant Lifebuoy with its special ingredient is all you need to give you protection for hours longer. Get the big thrifty bath size Lifebuoy today!

ATTRACTIVE NEW CORAL PINK TABLET



Now in a new-style wrapper instead of a box

W. 322 WWHPG

Page 47

# 5 HOLEPROOF gifts

(many gaily packaged)



for your "king of hearts" on Father's Day

**HOLEPROOF  
ZEALONS**

No darning—no shrinking!  
Your man gets more "Sox" appeal  
—you kiss the darning needle goodbye  
(See the special 2 pair gift boxes)

**HOLEPROOF  
PTU's  
brighter underwear**

He pulls them up and they stay up.  
No buttons—no bows. Easy to  
launder. Everlasting waistband.

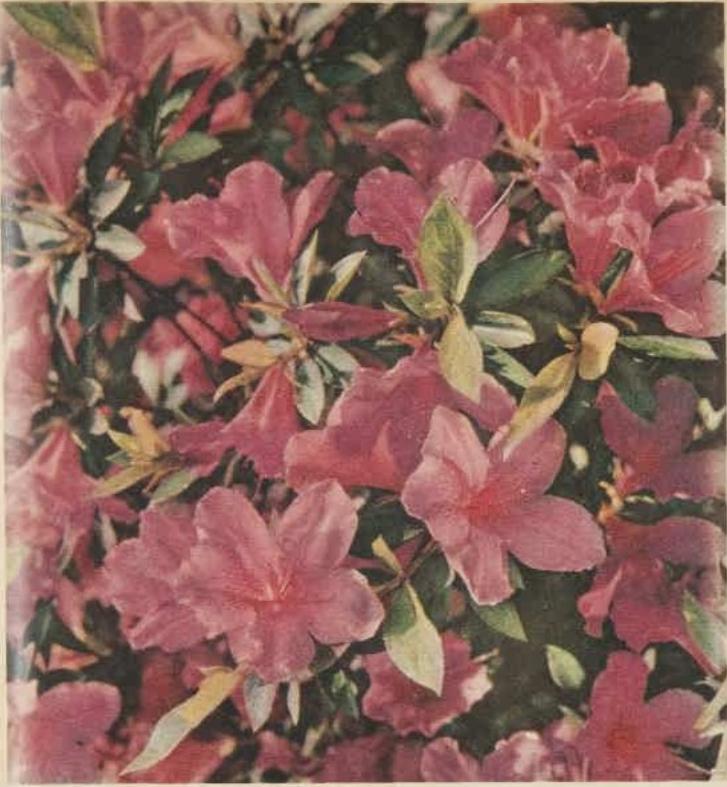
**HOLEPROOF  
TIES**

A Holeproof Tie to light up his eye—in bows, too.  
All beautifully made—and the very best fabrics.  
(Cellophane packed—with free print of Kipling's famous poem—"If")

**HOLEPROOF  
SHIRTS**

He'll always look fresh and neat in Peak of Perfection.  
The collar never curls, thanks to the pin in each collar peak.

**Buy with Confidence— EVERYTHING HOLEPROOF MAKES IS GUARANTEED**



AZALEAS, which can be grown from cuttings of half-ripened branches, make a beautiful show in shady spots in your garden. Azaleas like plenty of leaf mould, but cannot take lime in the soil.

## Seeds and cuttings

Every gardener worthy of the name, at one time or another, has sown the seed of annuals and known the thrill of changing little brown seeds into green growing things.

But not everyone has tried raising trees from seed.

ALL the eucalypts—or gum trees—and the wattles are easy to raise if you take the little trouble required to learn how.

Eucalypt seed should not be sown for two to three months after it has been harvested.

The seed should be sown in well-drained boxes of sandy loam. Good drainage is essential, because all the eucalypts are susceptible to a fungus disease called "damping off." It's hard to combat, but it can be avoided by not over-watering.

The seedlings should be transplanted to their permanent positions when they are about 12 inches high.

The beautiful red-trunked Angophora, which grows around Sydney and is commonly called the Sydney red-gum, should be treated as a eucalypt.

The gelatinous outer covering of wattle seeds should be removed before sowing. To do this, tie the seed loosely in a piece of cloth. Boil some water in an old container, remove it from the heat, throw in the seed, and leave it there until the water is cool. The coating can then be rubbed off easily. Let the seed dry before sowing it.

Sydney Christmas Bush is easy to raise provided the seed is fresh, while the Callistemons, or bottle brushes, grow readily from mature seed, which should not be harvested until the nuts open naturally.

The seeds of maples, elms, and poplars must be sown as soon as they are ripe. If they lose their high percentage of water through drying out they will not germinate.

Among the berries, you will get better germination with Cotoneaster and Crataegus if the fleshy seed cover is removed by soaking in water. On the other hand, holly seed needs to be left a while—even as long as 18 months—for it to develop properly.

The misty-blue jacaranda is very easy to raise from seed. It may be sown as soon as the hard woody seed case opens.

### GARDENING

It doesn't matter whether the flimsy wings are removed from the seeds or not.

Cupressus species are very suited to Australian cold-climate areas for hedges. They are best propagated by seed, which should be sown in autumn when the nuts open. These plants can also be struck by cuttings, but it is a slow business. Seedlings are quick.

Cuttings are a fine idea, because the reproduction is absolutely faithful. Cuttings are usually grown from stems, of which there are two sorts—soft wood and hard.

Soft-wood cuttings are usually short, about three inches; hard-wood ones may be longer, though except with plants like willow or pussy-willow where whole branches

can be struck, six inches is long enough.

In either, a slanting cut below a joint or bud should be made.

Soft-wood cuttings can be taken in winter from pentstemons, poinsettia, fuchsias, and roses; from pelargoniums, begonia, dahlia, forsythia, and verbena in spring.

Half-ripened wood of azaleas, camellias, and gardenias taken from mid to late summer gives a very fair strike as a rule.

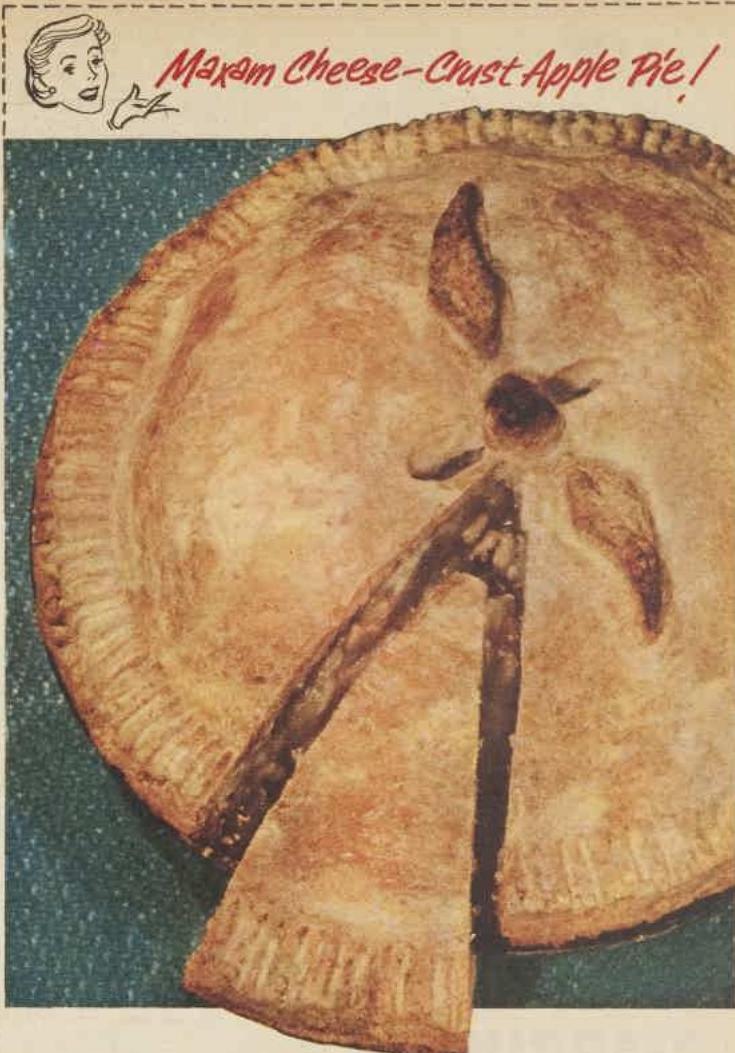
Hard-wood cuttings can be taken in winter from spiraea, weigela, daisies, hydrangea, lonicera, buddleia, abelia, poplars, philadelphus, wisteria, veronica, and willows.

Best results generally come from striking in coarse sand, which holds the pieces very firmly. Cover with glass if possible and keep moist but not slushy. Several cuttings can be rooted in together.

Rooting has probably occurred when the tops begin to grow. At this stage tip the pot up-side-down carefully, and if the pieces are rooted transplant them into a sandy loam, allowing one plant to each pot. When large enough, put out into permanent places.

Some plants, notably liquidambar, Chinese elm, and bouvardia, are struck from root cuttings. They should be about as thick as a pencil and up to six inches long. Plant them in a box of sand with the thicker end poking through the surface of the sand. Cover with glass and keep damp.

It is best to layer rhododendrons, magnolias, dogwood, oleander, and daphne. Slit half-way through a pendulous branch, then peg it to the ground, cover with soil, and stake to keep firm.



*Maxam Cheese-Crust Apple Pie!*

We guarantee you'll  
always make good pastry -  
with BAKEO

If you're not wholly satisfied with the pastry you make with BAKEO, then just return the packet to Maxam BAKEO, Stanley Street, South Brisbane, Qld., and we'll gladly refund the full purchase price.

You'll enjoy making your own pastry with BAKEO—there's never a failure because BAKEO is blended much more thoroughly and evenly than human hands could ever do.

#### It's so easy too!

**1** Add water or milk. That's all you do. No messy preparation. No guess-work. Everything is mixed for you.

**2** Then roll out and it's ready for the oven—ready to make the finest pastry you've ever made.

**3** Perfect Pastry because BAKEO is made from the finest selected flour and the purest light shortening.

#### MAXAM CHEESE CRUST APPLE PIE

**Ingredients:**  
PAstry — 2 cups BAKEO, barely  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cold water, 1 cup grated Maxam Cheese.

FILLING — 1 lb. cooking apples, 1 1/2 cups flour,  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon cinnamon,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon grated nutmeg,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon grated lemon rind.

**METHOD:**  
Mix BAKEO and water to fairly stiff dough. Roll out about 1 inch thick, and cover with grated Maxam Cheese. Fold sides, top and bottom into middle and roll out. Line pie dish with about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick. Slice apples thinly; put in a basin with all other filling ingredients and toss well together. Pack into lined pie-dish, pressing well in middle. Roll out remaining pastry and cover pie. Turn pastry edges in beyond rim and double under bottom crust to seal in juices. Crimp rim. Cut slits in top to let steam escape while baking. Glaze over with a little milk (or beaten egg). Put in moderate heat to moderate heat until pastry rim sets and begins to tint (about 10 mins.). Pie will take 50-60 mins. altogether. If it browns too much towards end, cover with folded sheet of brown paper.

**MAXAM**  
**Bakeo**  
PASTRY MIX



# PAIN goes quicker with DISPRIN

... because DISPRIN is soluble



You get faster relief from pain with Disprin because it quickly dissolves and enters your stomach in solution, thus ensuring rapid absorption into the bloodstream. Because ordinary aspirin and a.p.c. merely break up and enter your stomach as undissolved particles, they cannot act on pain as fast as Disprin. You can end pain faster with Disprin.

Disprin is obtainable from all chemists, in packages of 100, 26, and the handy 8 tablet bandbag or pocket pack.

#### TRY THIS EXPERIMENT

Drop a Disprin tablet and ordinary aspirin or ordinary a.p.c. into separate glasses of water. See how Disprin really dissolves; see by contrast how the others merely break up. They behave differently in water; they behave differently in your stomach.



## DISPRIN

Regd.

THE NEW Soluble ASPIRIN

07

### New! COLGATE'S *Tact* CREAM DEODORANT



**Stops  
Underarm  
Odour  
Before  
It Starts!**

Why you'll prefer Tact: Smooth, creamy Tact keeps you daintier longer! Gives dependable protection that lasts from bath to bath. Safe and sure for you, and for your daintiest clothes!



a soft green suit Elizabeth hadn't seen before. The lines of it took the heaviness away from her body; the color made her skin and hair years younger. Constance, fidgeting, examining the seams of her gloves minutely, seemed vaguely embarrassed over her own changed appearance.

Presently headlights glimmered through the gap in the hedge. Elizabeth and Oliver, realising simultaneously that the driver was not going to emerge, broke politely into small talk while Constance put on her coat and went to the door.

There she said breathlessly, "I've got my key . . . Goodnight," and let herself out into the windy dark.

"Don't wait up, Ma," murmured Oliver, catching Elizabeth's eyes. "Isn't this something new?"

Elizabeth answered that with a shrug. She set the table and lighted candles; in the kitchen she tasted Constance's salad dressing and added salt and a few drops of vinegar. She moved about automatically, and went on listening to the memory of Oliver's voice.

"I told you—don't call me here again." She had been discussed, warned against; she was, intolerably, the female in the oldest, shabbiest tag-line of all: If a woman answers, hang up.

And at the other end of the wire, whose voice?

Friday noon, same place. It sounded like the essence of all clandestine meetings; it sounded as alien to Oliver as the heavy exotic perfume had seemed in Noreen's bedroom. And it sounded like a warning bell that this was a part of what she feared.

In the living-room again she remembered all at once what had been driven out of her mind by the telephone call. Friday was the date of her morning appointment with Hathaway. It was a long-established hour that the always took when possible, because it meant she could meet Oliver for lunch before driving home.

She said casually, "Oh, by the way, can we have lunch together on Friday? Hathaway's seeing me at eleven, and I'll be through in plenty of time."

"Good," said Oliver promptly. "Dinty Moore's?"

She met his gaze squarely, and it looked pleased and inquiring. "Yes, let's," she said, turning away. Friday would tell her a great deal, Friday was the fork in the road . . .

They had dinner in comparative silence until Oliver reached for a cigarette and said mildly, "Constance made any New Year's resolutions that you know of?"

Elizabeth took fire instantly. "Such as what?"

"Such as plans," Oliver said, still mild. "Don't think I don't appreciate what she's done, because I do. But if we're to be a permanent unit of five instead

Continuing . . .

of four I think we ought to know about it and arrange things accordingly."

Five instead of four; it wasn't a felicitous phrase. Oliver, knowing it, said almost without pausing, "What I mean is that if she's staying we'd better make it known that where we're asked she is, and so forth. What we've got here is, if you'll pardon my saying so, a very half-hearted arrangement indeed."

"And what would you suggest?" inquired Elizabeth, unreasonably angry. "That I tell her we don't need her any more and to go?"

"No," said Oliver. "You know perfectly well what I mean."

But I don't, thought Elizabeth; that's just the trouble. I don't know whether you want us to be alone again or whether you're afraid of Constance, because she's my cousin, watching and recording with those eyes of hers. She said



"I don't care if it was unanimous — I want the desks replaced!"

stiffly, "I'll get coffee, shall I?" and escaped.

It was after coffee, it was nearly nine o'clock when Maire's scream rang through the quiet house.

To Elizabeth it was the sudden black eruption of everything hidden and malign in the house. She felt one burning wave of panic from head to foot, and then she was on the stairs and running before Oliver had time to do more than start to his feet and say, "Take it easy——"

Maire screamed again as Elizabeth reached the upper hall and brushed blindly past Noreen, bathrobed and blinking. She flung open the door of the children's room, her breath shaking, and saw them both there and safe. Jeep humped like a camel in his crib, Maire sitting up in a tumble of bedclothes.

She was only half awake. Elizabeth went to her and put a reassuring arm around the small pyjamaed shoulders. She couldn't have controlled her

## The Iron Cobweb

from page 47

"You know, some day," he said without inflection, "you're going to shoot up the stairs like that and trip and break your neck while Maire goes peacefully back to sleep."

Trip. And break her neck. While Maire . . . Elizabeth said tightly. "I can't help running when I—when anything, anything might happen in this house," and to her intense horror burst into tears.

Oliver was there instantly, much as she had been there for Maire, with close-holding arms and the safe, steady shelter that everyone, child or adult, sought at times to grow quiet against. It took Elizabeth some time to grow quiet, because the accumulated terrors of six weeks came spilling and hiccupping out into Oliver's chest.

Even then, remembering the short hostile exchange over Constance, she held back the forged cheques, as though the unadmitted fear in her own mind put them in a place apart.

She told Oliver frantically between sobs, about the roses: "I didn't, no matter what you think"; about the bon-bons: "Can't you see how horribly deliberate that was?"; about the face at Noreen's window: "I don't know who—and then the empty house. I'm so afraid," said Elizabeth unsteadily, lifting her head and staring blindly across the room. "I'm so terribly afraid."

Oliver's arms loosened. He was shaking his head gently, as though he were afraid to trust himself with any more violent gesture.

When she stopped speaking he tilted her face and said, "Elizabeth . . ." and groaned and gave his head a quick clearing shake and started again, gazing intently down at her. "You mean you've been living with this—this business ever since that mess over the roses? When you said yourself that . . ."

Elizabeth was queerly, instantly conscious of the importance of this. "When I said what?"

But Oliver shook his head, listening. Footsteps went directly down the hall, a light switch clicked, a door closed. Constance.

"Oh," Elizabeth said bleakly. "That does it up nicely."

"That," said Oliver, grim, "is what I meant. Here, let's have a cigarette and go at this a little at a time . . ."

Elizabeth stopped listening after the first few quiet words, realising what seemed just then the ultimate horror. She had told it all to Oliver, gasping and crying and shaking like a child—and Oliver was treating her like a child, to whom he might explain kindly that the shadow under her bed was her slipper.

No way out there, no one to help her pull after all . . .

She pulled stiffly away from Oliver as he concluded: "Ten to one I'm right. And things always look different in the morning—worse, maybe—but different. What you need at the moment is about twelve hours' sleep."

Elizabeth lifted her bare head and caught an astonishing glimpse of herself in her dressing-table mirror. Wild eyes, wet cheeks, recklessly ruffled hair . . . no wonder Oliver thought she was hysterical.

Or did he merely pretend to think so?

Oliver was in the mirror, too, his gaze thoughtful and far away. As though her eyes on his reflection had burned him he stood up and crossed to the bureau. "Think you could swallow a pill?"

"All of them,"

"Come now," said Oliver, his back to her. "I wouldn't—" His voice stopped, and Elizabeth glanced up at the sharp

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edged silence. "Aren't they there?"

"Got them," said Oliver, and brought her the capsule and a glass of water.

Elizabeth settled herself under the covers and caught Oliver at the edge of his bed. "Do you suppose Constance locked the front door?"

"Probably."

"I wish you'd look."

As soon as he had left this room resignedly Elizabeth slid out of bed and crossed to the bureau. When Oliver came back she was in bed again, composed, still, with nothing to show the violent pounding at her temples.

Two capsules left in the little grey pasteboard box that last night had held nine. Oliver knew it, because he had got the capsule the night before.

She was missing.

You'll trip and break your neck, said the shocked hammering of her blood.

And: What are we going to do about Elizabeth?

It could have been two o'clock or four when Elizabeth found herself awake, nudged out of sleep by a change in the texture of the icy, deep-night silence.

A bar of moonlight hung like a knife across the front of the bureau; she could almost have screamed at that. When the orientation of pulse and brain and senses was complete, she knew it was nothing in the room that had wakened her.

The curtains hung straight and still, the moonlight might have been a painted thing, across from her Oliver slept undisturbed, a long scissoring shape under blankets. She had dropped her head uneasily to the pillow again when she heard the soft, the indescribably secret sound.

She knew later that a louder sound must have preceded it, jarring her out of the depths of exhaustion. Because this would never have wakened her, this gentle and almost snuffing sound from somewhere below her in the house. As though she listened again and found it in the immense library of connected sounds stored by the mind for random use. It was the faint shudder of wood be-

Continuing . . .

## The Iron Cobweb

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ing pushed, the delicate answer of metal.

Someone was trying the front door.

But Oliver had gone down and made very sure of the lock. Hadn't he?

The back door, the cellar door with its other entrance into the kitchen; the porch door—open to a seeking hand at this unconscious hour? Her shoulders and throat ached from the steady, stubborn lift of her head as she listened. Elizabeth realised all at once that the sound had stopped and wouldn't come again.

The floor was cold under her bare feet as she stepped off the rugs in her progress to the window. It was a stage-set lawn: bare, arching trees, lawn draped with shadows, stone path glimmering faintly with frost. Only the hedge moved at the inner edges of its opening, as though it had been disturbed a bare second ago—or had she imagined that?

"Can't you sleep?" said Oliver's voice, shooting unexpectedly out of the dark.

How long had he been awake, how long had he watched her? Elizabeth answered at random and went back to bed, still listening acutely. She was almost asleep when she heard the small, infinitely careful closing of Noreen Delaney's door.

Maire running a slight fever. Constance preoccupied over her generous, post-Oliver breakfast, going away behind her pale, folded eyelids so that Elizabeth, fidgeting nervously with her coffee, felt as though she were excusing herself needlessly when she rose and went out to the kitchen.

Maire was making a bubbling hum in her orange juice. Jepp wore a cereal beard. Her plumb-blue suit, the fitted, stiff-skirted rosy tweed coat that wasn't really warm enough for a bitter day like this but might deceive Hathaway's bright and nonchalant eye.

Noreen had just poured the children's milk into cups in the pantry. Elizabeth watched with mild astonishment the narrow shoulders, the small deft hands go rigid. After a second the

hands went down automatically to the apron, twisting there, and the girl turned.

She said on a caught breath, "Mrs. March, that's what I've been wanting to ask you. If there's something I should be doing that I'm not doing . . . it's hard to know in a new place, and I've been wondering . . . I know you had someone satisfactory before me—"

"It's not that at all," Elizabeth interrupted hastily. "We're more than satisfied, Noreen. It's something else I wanted to talk to you about."

How pale the girl was, how braced . . . was it apprehension over her job, or a deeper fear? Elizabeth met the grave, green-brown eyes, shadowed in mause down to the ridge of cheekbone. The shadows were new: Noreen hadn't had those when she first came, nor the faltering look to the young, down-curving mouth.

**N**OREEN knew something—or she was afraid of something. Elizabeth was startled into changing her tack. She said gently: "Are you quite sure you like it here, Noreen? Don't be embarrassed to say so if you don't—children this age are quite an undertaking."

"Oh, please, Mrs. March, I love the children!" It was soft; it had an underlying violence, and Elizabeth was startled again.

Noreen gave her a small, anxious smile, and Maire said curiously, "Who loves the children?" and that, temporarily, was the end of it.

In the middle of Friday morning Elizabeth dressed with foolish, superstitious haste. Her plumb-blue suit, the fitted, stiff-skirted rosy tweed coat that wasn't really warm enough for a bitter day like this but might deceive Hathaway's bright and nonchalant eye.

She felt like a mad reversal of Lot's wife, as though the danger lay in looking forward to the ring of the telephone and Oliver's voice saying re-

gretfully that he couldn't meet her for lunch.

She had been braced all through breakfast, but all Oliver said was, "Call me from the office there when you're through, and I'll give you a head start and meet you in the bar at Dinty Moore's."

"Where you will take a head start?" She had felt gay with relief because Oliver was breaking his soft, hurried telephone appointment in order to meet her. There had been an obscure choice to make, and he had made it in her favor. Why look anxiously at the clock then, why want so urgently to be out of the house and on her way to Boston before anything could happen . . . ?

The telephone rang at nine-thirty and it was Brenda McColumn to ask them to an evening party on Christmas Eve. Elizabeth said they would love to, but were busy. It rang again at five minutes to ten.

Oliver said, "Of all days. Moulton's called an eleven-thirty conference. I'd like to sneak out the back way, but . . .

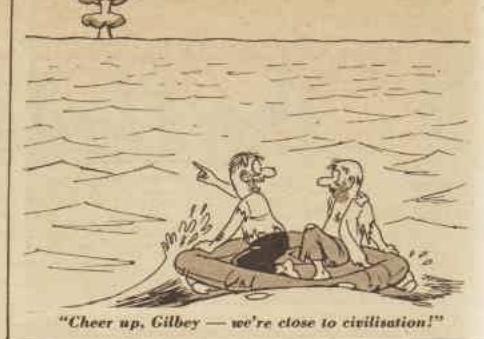
"You can't, of course not," Elizabeth said, carefully bright. "Oh, well, the skies won't fall. Have a nice meeting."

"Isn't that too bad?" said Constance abstractedly, glancing up from the desk in the living-room. "Oliver's tied up, is he?"

"So it seems. I'll see you later, or rather sooner," Elizabeth said, and closed the front door behind her and walked down the lawn to her car.

Oliver had calculated the time to a nicety, he hadn't pricked the bubble an instant too soon. It was a pity he had told her only a few days ago about Moulton's extended West Coast trip. Otherwise it might have sounded like the truth.

Hathaway saw her early and said with emphasis that she looked frightful; what was she trying to do to herself? Elizabeth sat in a fever of impatience while he asked questions, stared at her brightly, and at length wrote notes and



a prescription. The taxi she called came instantly, and it was just ten minutes to twelve when they pulled in at the curb opposite Oliver's office building.

She leaned forward. "Driver, I'm meeting someone here and we're going on. It shouldn't be more than a few minutes."

Noon, Oliver had said to the unknown voice on the telephone two days ago. And he would have to get wherever he was going. Elizabeth watched the stream of lunch-hour traffic at the mouth of the International Chemical Building, half-hoping that Oliver would not emerge at all, knowing coldly that he would.

Even then, at seven minutes to twelve, she might have missed him if it hadn't been for a snarl in the sidewalk traffic caused by a lost and bewildered French poodle.

In the small island of space made by veering pedestrians, Oliver appeared between the gilt-grilled doors of the grey marble lobby, halted briefly to cup his hands around a match, and started up the block. Elizabeth watched him without feeling anything at all.

He was going to cross the street, he was hailing the cab at the corner. Elizabeth clasped her hands tightly together in her lap and made a decision she hadn't consciously considered, perhaps because she

hadn't wanted to look closely at it. She leaned forward again to the driver.

"Oh, we've missed each other. It's that red-and-yellow cab up ahead, driver. If you'll follow that . . .

"The one that fellas just got in," said the driver baldly.

"Yes." She was stony with not caring. He had probably waited like this often, with women checking up on their husbands, men checking up on their wives. She hadn't thought she could ever do that, but the odd part of it was that at the last minute everything whittled down to the simple necessity of knowing.

What to do when you knew was something else again, and not even the most knowledgeable taxi-driver could help you there . . .

Oliver's cab led them into a part of Boston Elizabeth didn't know and wouldn't have been able to find again. She had stared at the red-and-yellow fenders ahead so long that she had stopped seeing them, and she was startled when the driver said laconically, "There goes your friend," and drew in to the kerb.

She had had change ready; she dropped it into his outstretched palm, and was out of the cab without ever having seen his face at all.

Revolving doors carried

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A DAILY THOUGHT:  
'ASPRO' WITH A CUP OF TEA

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THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — August 25, 1954

Continuing . . .

Oliver out of sight. With an instinctive caution she hadn't known she possessed, Elizabeth waited until a balding, mink-faced man in a trench coat had followed him before she walked up the three shallow steps and spun her way into the lobby of the Hotel Savoia.

She couldn't have said exactly how the Savoia branded itself, but it did. It might have been the general amber gloom, lighted at cautious intervals by a pink silk lamp, or the lounging bellboy whose eyes roved over her with a kind of bored speculation; it might have been the blonde seated with improbable hauteur just beside the elevators, or the stumbrous silence that pervaded the whole lobby.

She had thought herself numb and too driven to care, but her instant and violent distaste was so strong that it was an effort to remember why she was here and to find Oliver in the dimness.

To her right were a counter and a bookstall, directly opposite her, across an area of small couches and chairs with a few unwinking occupants, were the elevators and an alcove lined with public telephones.

At the end of the lobby to her left, Oliver's head and shoulders rose out of a giant rubber plant at the desk. Elizabeth advanced a little; he was

## The Iron Cobweb

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rapidly across the lobby towards the elevators.

She could still have escaped, she could have fled out into the winter sunlight, hoping to find a remnant of the pride she had had to shed at the door. But then she would have shed it for nothing . . . No. Find out what there was to fight—or indeed, if victory would be a little more intolerable than loss.

Elizabeth did what no power on earth could have forced her to do ten seconds ago: she walked briskly across the lobby, passing within two feet of Oliver and the group of people leaving the elevator, and stood in front of the telephone book on a chain in line with the elevators, so that his back was half turned to her.

It crossed her mind wryly that it was helpful in situations like this to know your husband's habits. Oliver would give his floor number as he entered the elevator . . . but would he here?

"Six," said Oliver, startlingly close by.

Six. No good at all, unless . . . The uniformed boy had stepped out of the elevator and was waiting for more passengers. A man and a woman Elizabeth hadn't seen before were

acutely, incredulously aware of her errand in this futile, pink-lit hotel. Not an automaton after all, not a woman she would have felt sorry and a little embarrassed about, but herself, Elizabeth March. In search of the shabbiest possible information about her husband, and finding it.

She forced herself up the corridor Oliver had taken, and looked at the room number. This was reality; it would be difficult later convincing herself of that. She wondered whether she would ever be able to forget the grey light from the window striking waterily across the numerals, or the little triangular chip in the paint just above them. Then she walked quickly away.

The room clerk watched her as she approached the desk; had he noticed her earlier across the lobby, seen her waiting, entering the elevator so urgently? The rose-red coat flared like a candle in the dusk; she was conscious of an automatic lift of eyes as she passed.

He listened attentively while, deliberately vague, she told him about a friend of a friend registered at the hotel. She believed the number of the room was 619, and the name—she had trouble finding one in the confusion of her mind—was Hunt.

The clerk gazed at her sardonically. "Sorry, madam. There's no one by that name registered here at the moment."

"Oh, but there must be." She was on firmer ground now that they both knew he didn't believe her. "I'm quite sure she said the Savoia, Room 619. Would you," she stared coolly back at him, "mind checking, please?"

The clerk sighed audibly and turned to ruffle through a slender stack of cards. He withdrew one and held it a little apart from the others; when he faced her again, Elizabeth, every nerve bared, saw instantly the subtle change in his manner.

A frond of the rubber plant quivered near her cheek. The clerk said with a kind of suave enjoyment, "Room 619 is occupied by a C. G. Massman. Sorry."

He had dropped the "Madam" pointedly, he was dismissing her with his eyes, his tone, a careless turn of his shoulder. "Alfred. Did Mr. Casales speak to you . . . ?"

Elizabeth walked away, on fire with fury at herself, at Oliver, at the knowing impudence that seemed to saturate the air. She didn't know what prompted her to look back. The room clerk had his elbows on the desk, confiding in an antique bellboy who was watching her retreat with a wrinkled, appreciative grin.

They all know a joke when they see one at the Savoia, Elizabeth thought, feeling the grin like a scald on her back. I hate you, Oliver, for every minute of this . . .

She clung to her anger as she would have clung to a spar, because under it waited the yawning and bottomless fear.

It was bitterly cold driving home. She kept herself fiercely from thinking, because there wasn't room in her mind for both traffic and shock. She reached the house at about two o'clock and found it empty and mockingly serene.

A match to the living-room fire, a cup of scalding tea—and then, inescapably, the facts. What, after all, did she know? That Oliver had made an obscure appointment by telephone and warned his caller to secrecy; that he had lied to her in order to keep the appointment, that it had had to be

Silence again, dimly busy with the echo of traffic. From somewhere close by sounded a heavy crash of glass, and a woman's voice said stormily, "Ox!"

All Elizabeth's detachment dropped away, and she was

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Page 53



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Continuing . . .

kept in a bedroom in a shady side-street hotel, under arrangements so blatant that even the hotel employees were amused.

That—because it came down to this—in the short space of not quite two months her life had gone casually to pieces.

Was it possible that all this was unconnected, that Oliver was so carried away by another woman that he had forgotten all his latent fastidiousness, his distaste of marital mark?

If that were true, then her marriage was as good as dissolved, because even if she could manage to go on living with Oliver, she could not possibly live with herself.

If it were not true—and it was that sliver of incredulity that had persuaded her to follow Oliver from his office—then he was caught in the same delicate mesh of malevolence that was spinning itself about everything she loved.

Constance, arriving in a little flurry of cold air, seemed mildly surprised to find her back.

"I thought you might spend the afternoon in town, you go in so seldom. Have you been home long?"

"Only a few minutes." Elizabeth watched her cousin removing her gloves, putting the fingertips and wrist edges meticulously in line, folding them away in her purse. Constance, she thought, was very like sand going through an hour-glass, recording everything, affected by nothing. She said, "The children are out for a walk, I gather."

"I believe," Constance was vague, "that Norrene had promised them something about the pond. It's too bad, isn't it, that you couldn't have made your trip into town with Mrs. Brent?"

Was there anything more than idleness in the thick-lidded eyes? No . . . No. Elizabeth flicked out a match with care. "I didn't know Lucy was going in."

"Oh, she may not have been. I picked up a few last-minute things in town just after you left, and when I saw her at the station I just assumed, for some reason . . . Tell me," said Constance, "what did the doctor say?"

"What doctors usually say. Liver-and-iron and sleep."

"That's all?"

"Yes," said Elizabeth surprised, and turned her head in time to see Constance flushing as unhappily as though she had been caught making a face at Elizabeth's back. She said awkwardly, "I just . . . you've seemed so—" and Elizabeth, sorry for her and regretting her own crispness, said, "It was just the usual check-up. But I haven't been sleeping as well as I ought."

"Nerves," said Constance briskly, herself again. "Although I must say that for the past night or two I've been unusually wakeful myself. It's the wind. I think—it makes you hear things."

"We're quite exposed here," Elizabeth said, and thought with sudden dreariness how little it took to remind her of fear, of the night when the sounds at the door had not been the wind.

"I hadn't thought of it before," said Constance reflectively, starting for the stairs, "but you are quite exposed, aren't you, Elizabeth?"

Oliver asked her about the doctor, too, with a casual, "Everything all right this morning?" when he got home that evening, with a subtly different tone up in their bedroom.

"What did Hathaway really say?"

"That I'm a little overweight and could use a few vitamins, but then," said Elizabeth,

## The Iron Cobweb

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and transferred them to the wall.

Elizabeth sat them finally down to listen to carols, and found that the small, flushed faces and faraway eyes seemed like an invitation to mirth, and frightened her more than ever.

By six o'clock she had them bathed and fed and in bed, with intense queries as to whether Santa Claus would come down the chimney when there was a fire burning in the fireplace. Elizabeth said gravely that they would put the fire out at once, and went into her own room to dress.

Not the satin-panelled black—she had worn it that other night when the Brents had come, and it still carried memories of shock. The copper faille, then, making a great deal of her white throat and very little of her waist, being in crisp extravagant folds.

She dressed; she went downstairs to find Oliver and Bill Seaver closeted in the pantry, making drinks, and Ellie Seaver, pink and gold and giddy, trapped bewilderedly in a conversation about tulips with Constance. At six-thirty the Stockbridges arrived, and the Brents.

Before they had all been there five minutes Elizabeth realised startled that Lucy and Steven were at each other's throats, that Steven was gently and forlornly drunk and Lucy silkily furious. It was in the living-room like vapor.

The Stockbridges were alert and fascinated, only taking themselves off reluctantly to meet a train; the Seavers, who knew the Brents less well, looked uncomfortable. Even Constance sat warily watching.

It wasn't anything they said to each other, it was more like a quarrel that had been dropped at the gate and would be resumed on the doorstep—or was it only that? Wasn't there a new sharpness in Lucy, a triumphant interchange of glances as though a point were being settled?

It was, thought Elizabeth, tired and faintly angry, the worst possible thing that could happen to a party—and it was also very odd between Lucy and Steven. Out of habit she sought Oliver's eye and caught a quick, accomplished grimace. Even then, nothing happened until nearly seven-thirty, when the Seavers had left, and then it was like a spark introduced into a gas-filled room.

Upstairs, a door opened. Elizabeth started uneasily to her feet, listening to the soft little sounds of pyjamaed feet, and Oliver said from the couch, "It's Christmas Eve, we'll be getting this all night." She sank back again uncertainly, because from her chair she could see the stairs.

It was Maire who rounded the turn of the hall so cautiously, Maire in her pink pyjamas, her pale gold head tousled and her eyes huge. She was so intent on her own tiptoeing progress that she didn't seem to notice Elizabeth's silent, instinctive rise. She reached the foot of the stairs and peered into the living-room, and she let out a wail of pure terror.

It wasn't the inarticulate howl of babyhood, it had a sound, a baying and stricken sound, that was like the very definition of danger. "Ooo . . . Ooo . . ."

Elizabeth ran to her and caught the small, trembling body close. She didn't know whether the panic had communicated itself or whether her own dreadful shaking had leaped to meet the cry that went plunging and echoing through her, like a stranger identifying himself at last.

To be continued

triumph when his calculations proved correct and the well came in at 4850 feet, producing a good thirty-gravity oil.

He knew he ought to be a happy man now; he could pay off his father and get rid of that outrageous interest rate, and the chances were excellent that the Mullen ranch would yield not just a single well but a large producing oil field. But he wanted to get away—and even Brazil, where a new oil pool had been located, wasn't far enough.

Finally, he had to tell himself the truth. Or maybe Rora told him.

It must have been nearly ten o'clock on Tuesday night when he saw her coming towards the fence where he was sitting. He'd carefully avoided her since the well had come in, making excuses about having to watch the job day and night.

He decided not to notice how her face reflected the rosy light from the flare gas they were burning off the well. It was a giant torch in the dark sky, and it seemed to soften that dancing, teasing light in Rora's dark eyes.

"Where's Moorehead to-night?" he said as she came up and perched beside him on the fence.

"He's giving a party—don't you remember? You were going to take me to it, I hoped."

He got off the fence and stood in front of her. "Look," he said, "I'm not going to take you to that dance, or any other dance—ever!"

"Well, at least you can take me back to the house and tell me why."

"You got all the way down here by yourself," he said shortly. "Why can't you go back the same way?"

"All right! I'll go!" she cried, and climbed down and began to run. "And I'll marry Claude Moorehead and be unhappy the rest of my life!"

Rushing headlong and sobbing, she got about a hundred feet and then she saw her fall over the stump of one of the trees they'd cut down to make way for the drilling.

## Continuing . . . Independent Operator

from page 9

He heard himself shouting, "Rora, Rora!"

And then he was picking her up, kissing her over and over again, saying a lot of foolish words he didn't know he knew.

She was saying some of them back to him when he heard a step and thought, of course, that it was old T.J. Here he was, Ed Branch, a man of his word, doing just what he'd promised not to do.

"Well, no wonder you didn't come over to my party!" The voice was Moorehead's; not the old fellow's at all.

Ed could see Moorehead clearly in the illumination from the rig lights, and for once Moorehead wasn't wearing that smile he liked to flash. He was saying, soft and low and very pleasantly, "I just figured on this setup bein' the way it is—you bein' the way you are, Branch."

"Maybe you'd better repeat that, nice and slow," Ed said, "so I can figure just what you mean."

Rora put her hand on Ed's arm. "Ed," she said softly, "don't get worked up—please!"

"He'll keep his head, all right," Moorehead said. "This guy is not only an independent operator, but a real tricky one as well. He was keeping his head okay—brushing you off like a cow pony brushes off a horsefly—right up to the time your cattle land turned out to be oil land."

"That's not true," Rora said. Then, almost as if she were trying to convince herself, she said, "Why, it couldn't be true, Claude."

"It sure could, honey," Moorehead said. "Any fool can see that it's not enough for an oil operator as smart as Ed Branch to hold just the lease rights to this property. Now that he's struck oil, he wants to marry the title. With the community-property laws in this State Branch'd be sittin' pretty once you were his wife."

Moorehead was beginning to smile again when Ed hit him, square in the middle of that

smile. He went down soft and easy with a little sigh.

And then Ed went on up to the house to pack. He had broken his part with old T.J. and kissed Rora—not once but quite a few times. And now Rora thought, quite naturally, that Moorehead was dead right about him.

He was in too deep with both of them to try to explain his way out. Old T.J. was right about oilmen, and letting them on to his place. He was even right, Ed told himself grimly, about not wanting Rora to marry one!

Now that the well was in production, he could leave everything in charge of Webb, his foreman and driller, and rush off to Houston.

E

D had an older cousin in Houston, a geologist with one of the major oil companies. They'd always got along well, and this cousin had been wanting to join up with him.

Well, now he could take over the job at the Mullen well. With Ed's findings to guide him, he could work out the field with equal success—and fewer emotional complications. They could seal up the deal within the next few days, and that would leave Ed free for further exploration elsewhere.

The second night he was in Houston, the desk clerk at the hotel called his room and said a man was waiting for him in the lobby. Ed didn't even ask who it was. He'd left his address with Webb in case any emergency arose, and he figured something had gone wrong at the well. He hurried down to the lobby.

"It's Rora!" old T.J. shouted to him as he came out of the elevator. "She's going to marry him! She swears she will. She's with him night and day!"

"Well, that's what you wanted, isn't it? Moorehead's a rancher."

"The lady gave it to me," he said. "I couldn't cash it no place, bein' a stranger and no-

body knowin' me. Figured you'd cash it for me, Mr. Branch."

Ed reached for the cheque. It

was made out for 25 dollars payment in full to Mr. Webb Eubank from Miss Aurora Mul-

lum. Ed began to smile. "Webb, why did she give you this? Why did you take it?"

Webb looked down at the cheque, frowning. "It wasn't the money made me say I'd see her to parties and such. It was just that I didn't know how to say no to her. She said she needed my help real bad and she wouldn't take it unless I let her put it on a business basis."

Ed counted out twenty-five dollars and gave them to Webb. With the cheque in his hand, he walked across the field to the porch where Aurora was sitting in the swing.

He was almost on the porch before she looked up and saw him. Her expression of joy changed to shock when she saw the cheque he was holding in his hand.

"Webb didn't—You didn't—Of all the low-down mean tricks to play on a girl who's just trying to—"

Ed sat beside her and began to swing idly to and fro. Rora got up immediately, blushing and furious. "Okay, I did pay Webb Eubank to take me around!" she cried.

"That's what I figured, soon as I saw the cheque."

"And I guess you figured out the rest, too. I wanted you back here so badly I had to think up some way to get Grandad to go after you, even if you didn't care anything about me. Even if you just cared about the land, like Claude said. And about oil, like you said."

"Look," Ed said angrily, "there's a lot I can't explain—but I do mean to get this much straight: when I kissed you, your land didn't have anything to do with it! There's a lot I'd say if you weren't Aurora Mul-

lum!"

Something crashed on the steps. "There go my field glasses," T.J. said with a sigh. He started to pick them up, and then gave them a kick with his boot.



"Broken. Well, I won't be needin' them any more, I guess. Had 'em trained on Rora since the day you walked on this land, young man, and you kept your part of the bargain. I saw you shooshing her away from you, morning, noon, and night—just like you agreed to do if I let you lease this land."

He sat down on the steps, as he had the first day, but this time he was smiling. Rora was smiling too, a sudden dazzling smile of enlightenment.

"Why, you scheming old scallawag, wringing a promise like that from Ed! No wonder he fought me off."

Ed wasn't fighting her off any more. She was suddenly in his arms, and he was not protesting.

The old man sighed again, and then began to laugh. "Lightheaded as that girl is, it's going to take an oil operator to look out for her," he said. "To much responsibility for an old cattlemen my age."

Ed started to say that she wasn't lightheaded at all, that she was wonderful, beautiful, clever—but it seemed better just to nod when the old man said. "The other two girls can marry ranchers. They're less trouble around the place anyway."

(Copyright)

# NEVER be satisfied with HALF WHITE

Always follow the three essential washday steps to get whites sparkling white

**WASH**  
However you wash—in a Washing Machine or Copper, washing loosens dirt but only partially removes it.

**RINSE**  
Rinsing is necessary to get rid of the remaining dirt.

**BLUE**  
The final rinse in Reckitt's Blue. This is the way to keep whites truly white...to stop them turning yellow.

### ★ TESTS PROVE.

Washing tests have shown conclusively the wonderful effect of Reckitt's Blue in preventing whites developing a yellowish tinge. That's why you cannot afford to miss the blue rinse any washday.

# Reckitt's Blue

OUT OF THE BLUE COMES THE WHITEST WASH

A little bird told me . . . that Robin

Starch, the easy-to-mix starch, makes ironing easier and gives a lovely gloss. Robin

Starch, the perfect washday companion of Reckitt's Blue.

**ROBIN**  
Starch

Gives w-i-n-g-s to your iron

# Sizzling with tasty goodness!



From the Kraft Kitchen

"FRANKFURT-CHEESE SPECIAL"

— a big, economical family meal

"Every time you cook a main course dish with Kraft Cheddar, you save money," says Elizabeth Cooke. "For example, look at my 'Frankfurt-Cheese Special'. Here's a hearty, family dish — packed with nourishment. Kraft Cheddar is actually richer than sirloin beef in nourishing protein — and gives you additional food values you won't find in meat . . . the essential vitamins A, B<sub>2</sub> and D, plus calories and those valuable milk minerals, calcium and phosphates. What a bargain in nutrition. So give your family this big, nourishing meal tonight."

"FRANKFURT-CHEESE SPECIAL"

4 medium potatoes; 1 medium onion;  
3 tomatoes (tinned or fresh); 1 egg;  
8 ozs. Kraft Cheddar; 3 frankfurts;  
2 cup milk; Small rasher of bacon.

Chop bacon and onion and grate cheese. Peel and slice potatoes and tomatoes. Parboil the potatoes and the frankfurts for 5 minutes in salted water. Skin and slice frankfurts. Beat egg and add to milk. Grease a casserole and cover the bottom and sides with the well-drained potato slices. Sprinkle with the chopped onion, bacon, grated cheese, and season well. Add a layer of frankfurts and tomatoes. Repeat layers, saving enough cheese to sprinkle on top, and arranging extra potato slices around the edge. Pour beaten egg and milk into the dish and sprinkle with cheese. Bake in a moderate oven, 350°F. for 40 minutes or until it is set and the cheese brown on top. Serve with green peas and garnish with extra slices of tomato and frankfurt. Four generous serves.



good reasons why  
Kraft Cheddar is best  
cheese value!

- 1 NO RIND—NO WASTE
- 2 FLAVOUR NEVER VARIES
- 3 SLICES EASILY—  
NEVER CRUMBLES
- 4 STAYS FRESH
- 5 PASTEURISED FOR PURITY

## KRAFT CHEDDAR

SOLD EVERYWHERE IN THE BLUE 8 OZ. PACKET OR FROM THE ECONOMICAL 5 LB. LOAF.

● Many women prepare over 1000 meals each year, so a little money saved here and a little saved there can make a surprising difference to the housekeeping purse and perhaps allow for a luxury dish in the menu now and again. The recipes on this page offer suggestions for making good wholesome dishes from everyday ingredients, at the same time making full use of every particle.



# Pennywise

CAREFUL planning can save an amazing amount of money, time, and energy.

Remember that good cooking and attractive methods of serving work miracles with economy ingredients.

Spoon measurements in all our recipes are level.

**BLANQUETTE OF TRIPE**  
One and a half pounds tripe, 1½ teaspoons salt, 1 onion, 2 or 3 small pieces bacon or bacon rinds, 2 medium carrots (cut into large chunky pieces), cold water, 2½ tablespoons flour, 1 scant teaspoon dry mustard, 1½ cups milk, 1½ tablespoons butter or substitute, 1 dessert-spoon lemon juice, ½ cup peas, ½ cup chopped cooked bacon, parsley.

Wash tripe well, scrape under side, cut into 1in. squares. Place in saucepan, cover with cold water, bring to the boil, drain. Add fresh cold water to barely cover, salt, sliced onion, bacon or bacon rinds, carrots. Cover and bring to boiling point, simmer 2½ hours or longer or pressure-cook 30 to 45 minutes, according to quality of tripe. Remove bacon rinds, drain, reserving ½ pint of the liquid. Return to pan, add flour and mustard blended to a smooth paste with the milk and reserved liquid. Stir until boiling, fold in butter or substitute, lemon juice, and peas. Reheat gently to boiling point, fill into heated serving dish, top with chopped cooked bacon and garnish with parsley. Serve piping hot.

**BAKED FRUIT CHARLOTTE**  
Two cups stewed fruit pulp, 1 cup soft breadcrumbs, 3 or 4 thin slices stale bread, ½ cup milk, sugar, spice, 1 tablespoon melted butter.

Lime greased ovenware dish with fingers of stale bread, moisten with milk. Cut some fingers of bread for

top of dish, brush with milk. Add remainder of milk to breadcrumbs, combine with fruit pulp, adding sugar and spice to taste. Fill into dish, cover with bread fingers. Pour melted butter over, bake in moderate oven 30 to 40 minutes. Serve hot.

## PEA-POD SOUP

Pea pods from 1lb. peas, ¼ teaspoon thyme or mixed herbs, 3 shallots, 3 or 4 tablespoons minced onion, 2 medium-sized potatoes, 1½ teaspoons salt, pepper, 1oz. butter or substitute, 1½ pints stock or water, 1 teaspoon sugar, 2 tablespoons ground rice, ½ pint milk.

Melt shortening and add pea pods, thyme, chopped shallots, onion, diced potato, and seasoning. Sauté for 5 minutes, add sugar and stock or water, simmer gently about 45 minutes. Pass through sieve, pressing as much of the pulp through as possible. Add the ground rice blended with a little of the milk.

Simmer for 10 minutes and then add remainder of the milk. A few drops of green coloring may be added. Serve piping hot.

## LAMB CASSEROLE

Five or 6 neck chops, 1 carrot, 1 parsnip, 1 onion, 2 tablespoons flour, 1 teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon pepper, 1 teaspoon vinegar, 2 cups stock or water, 1 tablespoon chopped parsley.

Trim chops, coat with flour, salt, and pepper. Place in casserole, sprinkle with balance of flour. Pour in vinegar and stock or water, sprinkle with chopped parsley. Arrange carrot and parsnip slices over top of casserole, onion slices around edge. Cover and bake in moderate oven 1½ hours. Remove lid, add parsley puffs, cook without lid 20 minutes.

**Parsley Puffs:** Sift ¾ cup self-raising flour with pinch of salt. Rub in 3 dessertspoons butter or substitute, add a good pinch grated lemon

rind and 1 tablespoon chopped parsley. Mix to a soft dough with 1-3rd cup milk. Drop in marble-sized pieces into casserole, cook as above

**APPETISING dinner dish that tastes as good as it looks. Tripe, an economical ingredient, is delicious flavored with onions, carrots, mustard, and bacon. See recipe below.**

back from the edge with the fingertips—surface should crinkle and glaze.

## CHEESE FLUFFED POTATOES

Three or four potatoes, 3 or 4 tablespoons hot milk, 1 dessertspoon butter or substitute, 1 teaspoon grated or scraped onion, 1 dessertspoon chopped parsley, pepper or cayenne pepper to taste, ½ cup grated processed cheese.

Wash and dry potatoes, prick all over with a skewer. Bake on oven shelves in moderate oven 1 to 1½ hours or until quite soft. Cut in halves lengthwise, scoop out soft potato, leaving shells barely ¼in. thick. Cream potato with milk, butter, onion, parsley, and pepper. Fill back into potato shells, top with grated cheese. Reheat and brown tops in oven or under griller.

## CANDIED LEMON OR ORANGE PEEL

Lemon or orange peel, salt, water, sugar.

Remove all pulp from squeezed orange or lemon halves; cut into quarters or thin strips 1in. long, or leave in halves. Cover with salted water (2 teaspoons salt to 1 pint water), stand overnight. Rinse in cold water, drain thoroughly. Cover with fresh cold water, simmer until quite tender; change water 2 or 3 times to remove bitter flavor. Drain.

**VEGETABLES:** Do not peel or scrape young carrots, parsnips, or potatoes. Use the green vitamin-rich outer leaves of cabbage, cauliflower, and lettuce. Pressure-cook vegetables or cook in a minimum amount of water.

**PASTRY and biscuit dough:** If not all used in the one baking, wrap the balance in waxed paper and store in a cool place. Roll and bake as required.

## ... and here are more tips on saving household money

It's good housekeeping strategy to make the most of everything that comes home in the shopping basket. Here are some easy ways:

**M**EAT: Try using the cheaper cuts of meat for grilling, first making them tender with commercially prepared tenderiser, used according to directions. Carefully save fat trimmings and clarify them, together with strained fat from the baking-dish, frying-pan, and grill-pan. Clarified fat makes good pastry.

**BETTYS:** Crumb custards, or for breadcrumbs, Melba toast, croutons, sippets, fried bread, etc.

**BONES** from a cooked joint may be used in stock and soup. Ask the butcher for the bones when you buy a boned joint.

**FRUIT:** Peelings and cores should be simmered with water to extract their flavor and value. The liquid can be sweetened and used as a beverage or for sweet sauce or syrup glaze. Orange and lemon rinds may be candied for use in cooking.

**MILK:** If milk has become sour, use it for mixing scones or tea-cakes, or in salad dressings.

**VEGETABLES:** Do not peel or scrape young carrots, parsnips, or potatoes. Use the green vitamin-rich outer leaves of cabbage, cauliflower, and lettuce. Pressure-cook vegetables or cook in a minimum amount of water.

**PASTRY and biscuit dough:** If not all used in the one baking, wrap the balance in waxed paper and store in a cool place. Roll and bake as required.

RAISIN JOE SAYS:-

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## PRIZE RECIPES

Two biscuit recipes win prizes for readers in this week's contest.

ORANGE slices and rolled oats fingers will be most appreciated and enjoyed served with a fruit drink as an after-school snack or at your next afternoon tea party.

A tasty grilled meat dish wins a consolation prize.

All spoon measurements in our recipes are level.

### ORANGE SLICES

Four ounces butter or substitute,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup castor sugar, grated rind and juice of 1 orange, 1 cup plain flour,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup self-raising flour, 1 tablespoon custard powder, 1 tablespoon cornflour.

Filling: One and a half cups icing sugar, 1 dessert-spoon butter, grated rind and juice of  $\frac{1}{2}$  orange.

Create butter or substitute with sugar and orange rind. Add juice, beat well. Work in sifted dry ingredients. Shape into small balls, press down with a lightly floured glass tumbler with a fancy base to give an attractive design to the biscuits. Bake on greased tray in moderate oven 10 to 15 minutes. Cool on tins. Join with filling.

Filling: Sift icing sugar, add butter, orange rind and juice, heat over low heat until well mixed and smooth.

First Prize of £5 to Mrs. N. Grundy, Garrick St., Coolangatta, Qld.

### DEVILLED STEAKS

Four half-inch-thick mutton steaks cut from leg, 1 dessert-spoon Worcestershire sauce, 1 dessert-spoon curry powder, 1



Give a smart  
touch to  
house linens

ORANGE SLICES and rolled oats fingers are two of the prize-winning recipes in this week's contest. See recipes on this page.

dessertspoon sugar, 1 dessert-spoon olive oil, 1 dessert-spoon flour, 1 tablespoon tomato sauce, 1 tablespoon vinegar, salt and pepper to taste.

Combine all seasoning ingredients, rub over meat. Allow to stand 2 to 3 hours, so flavor will penetrate the meat. Grill 6 to 10 minutes, turning once. Serve immediately.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Miss B. Forbes, 22 Fisher St., Fullarton Estate, S.A.

### ROLLED OATS FINGERS

One cup coconut, 2 cups rolled oats,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 4oz. butter or substitute.

Mix all dry ingredients together, pour melted shortening over, mix well. Press mixture into ungreased slab-tin, bake in moderate oven 45 minutes. Remove from oven, cut into fingers, and allow to cool in tin.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Mrs. F. Rees, 27 Bradman St., Merrylands, N.S.W.



2078

## CARE OF THE SKIN

By SISTER MARY JACOB, our Mothercraft Nurse

BESIDES being a covering for the body the skin is an important organ through which many poisonous substances pass.

If the skin is not kept healthy and functioning well, the kidneys have more work to do. Body-heat is also controlled by the skin and for this reason neither children nor adults should be overclothed.

Most babies are born with perfect skin, but the use of wrong soaps, clogging of the

pores with powder, and rough or insufficient drying are often the cause of imperfections.

Water, sun, and air are necessary to keep a baby's skin clean, dry, and not overheated.

A leaflet dealing with some of the common skin rashes that are so irritating to a baby can be obtained from The Australian Women's Weekly Mothercraft Service Bureau, Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney. A stamped addressed envelope must be enclosed.

## HONEY COOKERY CONTEST

Our special cookery contest, in which prizes to the value of £250 will be given for the best recipes in which honey is used, closes on September 1.

BE sure your entries reach us by that date. Prize-winners will be announced in October.

The list of prizes to be won is: First prize, £100; second prize, £50; third prize, £25; five section prizes each of £10; 25 consolation prizes each of £1.

Recipes may be entered in any or all of these sections:

1. Cakes (including small cakes, pastry, fancy breads, and biscuits).

2. Desserts (hot or cold).

3. Confectionery.

4. Beverages.

5. Savory or meat dishes with honey.

### CONDITIONS:

1. Recipes must be written clearly on one side of paper only—in ink or typed.
2. Full name and address (including State) to be signed clearly on each page. Indicate on each page the section in which recipe is to be entered.
3. Exact weights and/or measures to be given in level standard measuring cups, tablespoons, and teaspoons—do not use rounded, heaped, or scant measures.
4. Ingredients to be listed accurately in the order in which they are used; directions for mixing and cooking must be clear, complete, and concise.
5. Recipes will be judged on their originality, practicability, and economy.
6. The decision of the judges will be final. No entries will be returned and no correspondence can be entered into concerning recipes. Interviews cannot be granted.
7. Address your entries to The Australian Women's Weekly, Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney. Mark the envelope "Honey Cookery Contest."

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY - August 25, 1954

# Oh, so delicious... best chicken soup you ever tasted

... HOME-MADE THE MODERN WAY !



One packet makes  
4 BIG BOWLS

## That's real Chicken... That's Continental

BRAND

ONE SIP and you realise that Continental brand Chicken Noodle Soup is something pretty wonderful. You know at once that it's chicken — tender, plump chicken simmered slowly to make that golden, nourishing broth. Lots of enriched egg noodles and just the right touch of herbs and parsley combine to give Continental the delicious goodness of the most carefully home-made chicken soup.

Yet this grand soup costs even less than regular home-made soups and saves hours of time and trouble. You simply add water and simmer. In just seven minutes you're rewarded with four big bowls of steaming, really home-tasting chicken soup. Why not tonight?

... and don't forget this other  
grand Continental Soup

5 garden-fresh vegetables  
in rich tomato stock!  
Home-made the modern  
way—in only 10 minutes!  
One packet makes 4 big  
bowls!

Thrifty...  
convenient...  
for real home-made  
goodness



You can be sure of the products recommended by *Betty King*

Address any correspondence to Betty King, Box 2625, G.P.O., Sydney

BLOOMER GIRL '54 - '55



THIS SEASON the bloomer suit steals the fashion spotlight—and sketched are two of the most delightful "bloomer" designs from the new Scamp collection.

"Fiesta" (L) is in silky textured cotton—an exclusive Scamp print in dashing colours. Note the new long torso line, the firm cord trim

that snugs the suit. "Mam'zelle" (r.) introduces another exclusive Scamp fabric—Pin Stripe Lastex. Gives a shimmering silvery effect that is most breathtaking. Design highlights are the drawstring bust detail and elasticised sharkskin legbands, bra trim and cinch belt with "boy scout" buckle.



For eggs, bacon, butter  
milk, fish or meat,  
look for this sign  
when you're down the street

Shop here  
where food is  
**Frigidaire Fresh**

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Look Out For

## CHAMPIONSHIP TENNIS

By  
*Maureen Connolly*

Photographs demonstrating the great tennis player's methods, along with her simply written expert instruction and advice, will prove invaluable to all aspiring players.

Price 9/6  
From all Booksellers

# Fashion PATTERNS

## BARGAIN PATTERN

F3340.—An easy-to-make full skirt and low-necked blouse. Sizes 32in. to 38in. bust. The skirt requires 1½yds. 36in. material and 7yds. ric-rac braid. The blouse requires 1½yds. 36in. material and 3yds. ric-rac braid. Price, 2/-.



F3338.—A dainty lingerie set, ideal for a trousseau. Sizes 32in. to 38in. bust. Requires 7yds. 36in. material, 1yd. 36in. lace, 2yds. lin. lace edging, 7yds. 4in. lace edging, and 7yds. 4in. ribbon. Price, 4/6.

F3339.—Simple but smart button-fronted frock. Sizes 32in. to 38in. bust. Requires 4½yds. 36in. material and 1yd. 36in. contrast material. Price, 3/6.

F3341.—A smart tailored blouse for a matron. Sizes 40in. to 46in. bust. Requires 2½yds. 36in. material. Price, 2/6.

F3342.—A pretty summer party frock for a young girl. Sizes 32in. to 38in. bust. Requires 6yds. 36in. material. Price, 3/6.

F3343.—An attractive low-necked frock with a matching jacket for street wear. Sizes 32in. to 38in. bust. The frock requires 3½yds. 36in. material. The jacket requires 2yds. 36in. material. Price, 4/6.

**FASHIONS PATTERNS** and  
Needlework Notions may be  
obtained from **Fashion Patterns**,  
P.O. Box 66-D, Hobart, Tasmania;  
Ultimo, Sydney (Eastern address  
Box 4060, G.P.O., Sydney). Tasmanian  
readers should address  
orders to Box 66-D, G.P.O.,  
Hobart; New Zealand readers to  
Box 668, G.P.O., Auckland.



NOTE: Please  
make a second  
choice. No  
C.O.D. orders  
accepted. All  
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tions over 10/-  
sent by registered  
post.

## NEEDLEWORK NOTIONS

No. 720—LITTLE GIRL'S FROCK  
A pretty checked gingham child's dress, cut not ready  
for you to machine, with full instructions for making.  
Available in red-and-white, green-and-white, blue-and-  
white, and yellow-and-white. Sizes 18in. bust, 18-11/2in. length  
for 18in. bust, 21in. bust, 21-11/2in. length for 21in. bust,  
24in. bust, 24-11/2in. length for 24in. bust, 27in. bust,  
27-11/2in. length for 27in. bust, 30in. bust, 30-11/2in. length  
for 30in. bust, 33in. bust, 33-11/2in. length for 33in. bust.  
Registration and postage, 1/- extra.

No. 721—LUNCHEON SET

A dainty luncheon set, unboxed ready for you to embroider  
on cream or white pure Irish linen. Also available in  
blue and white. Sizes 18in. bust, 18-11/2in. length and + cup-and-  
saucer mats 3in. x 3in. Price, 18-11/2in. complete. Thirteen-piece set with centre  
mat 17in. x 17in., 6 place mats 11in. x 11in., and + cup-and-  
saucer mats 3in. x 3in. Price, 21in. complete. Registration and postage, 2/- extra. Serviettes to  
match, 11in. x 11in. each. Postage, 3d. extra.

No. 722—TEA-TOWELS

Attractive linen tea-towels, 22in. x 22in. each, traced ready to embroider. Price, 5/- each or 17/- for a set of three. Registration and postage, 1/- extra. Postage on individual tea-towel, 6d.

No. 723—SEERSUCKER FROCK

A full-skirted seersucker frock with big patch pockets, cut out ready to make with easy-to-follow instructions. Available in white, sky blue, light grey, lemon, pale pink, saxe blue, and maize. Sizes, 32in. and 34in. bust, 39-1/2in. bust, and 38in. bust, 42-1/2in. bust. Registration and postage, 2/- extra.



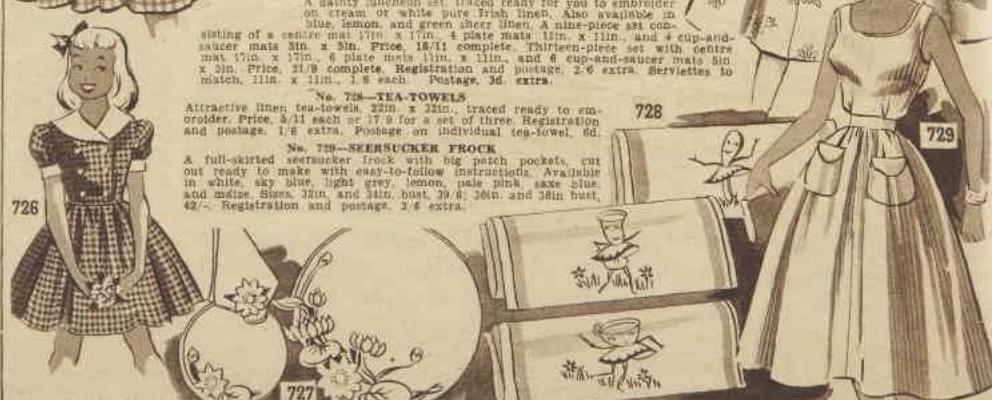
F3341



F3342



F3343



728

727

729

How  
to make...

## HUNGARIAN STEW

(with Keen's Mustard)

- 2 lbs. beef
- 1 large cut; 4 teaspoons pepper
- 1 onion minced
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 teaspoons Mustard
- 4 cups bouillon or water
- 1 cup tomato juice
- 4 tablespoons butter

Cut meat in cubes, fry in pan until brown, add chopped onion, seasoning and flour; continue frying 10 minutes, pour stock over and cook until tender, then add Tomato juice and a little cream. Serves 5 to 6 people.



CYCLAMEN-TONED anemones, rose-pink tulips, blush-pink hyacinths, and crotalaria leaves are used in this flower piece.

## \*SWISS STEAK SAVOURY

(with Keen's Mustard)

- |                              |                     |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| 2 lbs. round steak           | 2 small kidneys     |
| 3 tablespoons flour          | 1/2 teaspoon ginger |
| 1/3 teaspoon mixed dry herbs | 1 teaspoon salt     |
| 1 tablespoon Mustard         | 4 onions            |
| 1 tablespoon Worcester Sauce |                     |

Cut steak and kidneys in small pieces. Mix flour, ginger, salt and mixed herbs. Roll meat in mixture. Put in casserole, add Mustard and Worcester Sauce. Cover with boiling water, simmer 3 hours. Add onions and cook 1 hour longer. (To prepare quickly, use pressure cooker.) Serves 4 or 5 people.

## KEEN'S MUSTARD

makes all the difference!



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- ★ NUGGET POLISHES QUICKER, CLEANER, BRIGHTER
- ★ NUGGET BLACK IS BLACKER
- ★ THE NEW DARK TAN IS RICHER

*You can rely on NUGGET*

THE WORLD'S LARGEST-SELLING SHOE POLISH



## SPRING DESIGN

BERIN SPIRO, New Zealand flower expert, says that the design pictured above is unorthodox treatment of the flowers used in it.

It illustrates his point that one of the first aims of flower arrangement is to create an effect which can often best be achieved by a divergence from formal styling.

To commence this design, place two tulip buds left of centre and then a fully de-

veloped hyacinth slightly forward, but on the same level as the tulips. Now arrange three anemones on a graduating scale to the left of the tulips. Continue the line down to low centre. Let two droop over the bowl's rim.

The next placement is an extension to the right with a long slender tulip. Left and right of centre, add two lightly developed hyacinths. Two more anemones are posed right of centre and in an opposing line put in a small hyacinth.

## Bedroom furniture



THE prettily dressed furniture pieces that win the £3/3/- cash prize in our weekly contest on how to make something new from something old commenced with the renovation of an old washstand.

Mrs. P. A. Clancy, School House, Hatches Creek, Northern Territory, sent in the winning entry.

"In the first home we occupied after our marriage there was a dilapidated washstand which had been discarded by the previous tenants," Mrs. Clancy writes.

"After sandpapering it, my husband added a top to cover the hole and made a shelf below. The stand was then painted with two smooth coats of enamel and finished with a

frilled skirt of polka-dot cotton and tinted unbleached calico. A beading and bows of black velvet ribbon were used for contrast.

"The transformation was so pleasing I enamelled a kitchen chair and made a matching frilled cushion and slip-cover for the back to make a bedroom chair.

"For a bedspread and frilled pillow-case I tinted more unbleached calico and trimmed it with hem bands of the polka-dot material."

Each week a cash prize of £3/3/- is given to the reader who sends in the most interesting and useful article that has been made from something old.

Address your entry for the contest to The Editor, Home-maker Department, The Australian Women's Weekly, Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney.



new "three flowers" face powder keeps skin petal-fresh for hours—won't cake or streak

If you want to look your best all the time, change to Three Flowers—the new type face powder so popular everywhere. See how quickly lines and roughness disappear. See how softly lovely your skin feels.

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Cherries, pineapple, candied orange peel, ginger and crisp, roasted almonds in Mac. Robertson's new Milk Chocolate. In 1/4-lb. blocks and the handy smaller size.



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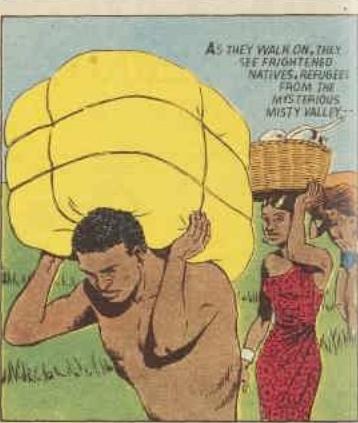


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TO BE CONTINUED

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — August 25, 1954

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NOTE: Please make a second color choice. No C.O.D. orders accepted. If ordering by mail, send to address given on page 66. Fashion Frock may be inspected or obtained at Fashion Patterns Pty. Ltd., 645 Harris Street, Ultimo, Sydney.



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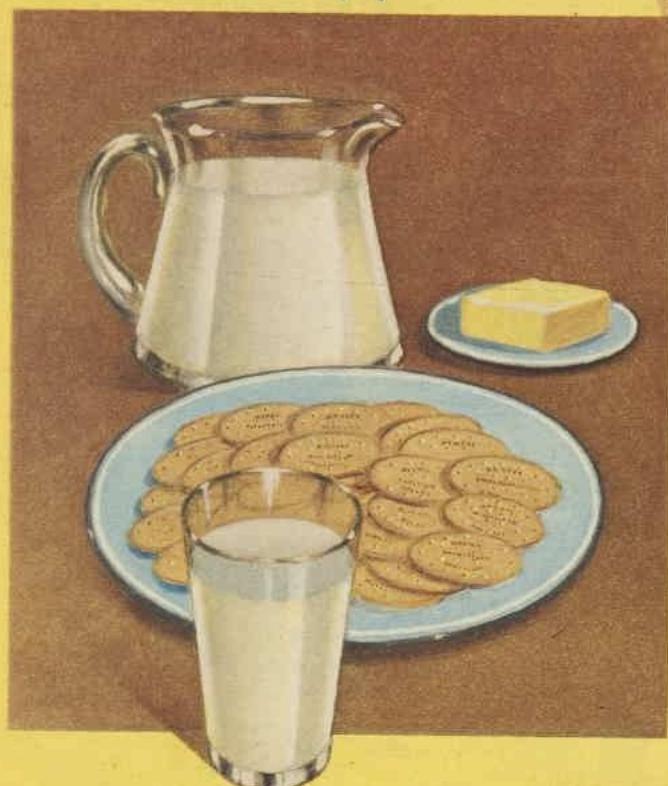
The record of eleven years of inspiration, work, and stubborn optimism under terrific difficulties, and of final success when a jet-propelled aeroplane flew for seventeen minutes in 1941.

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Page 63

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